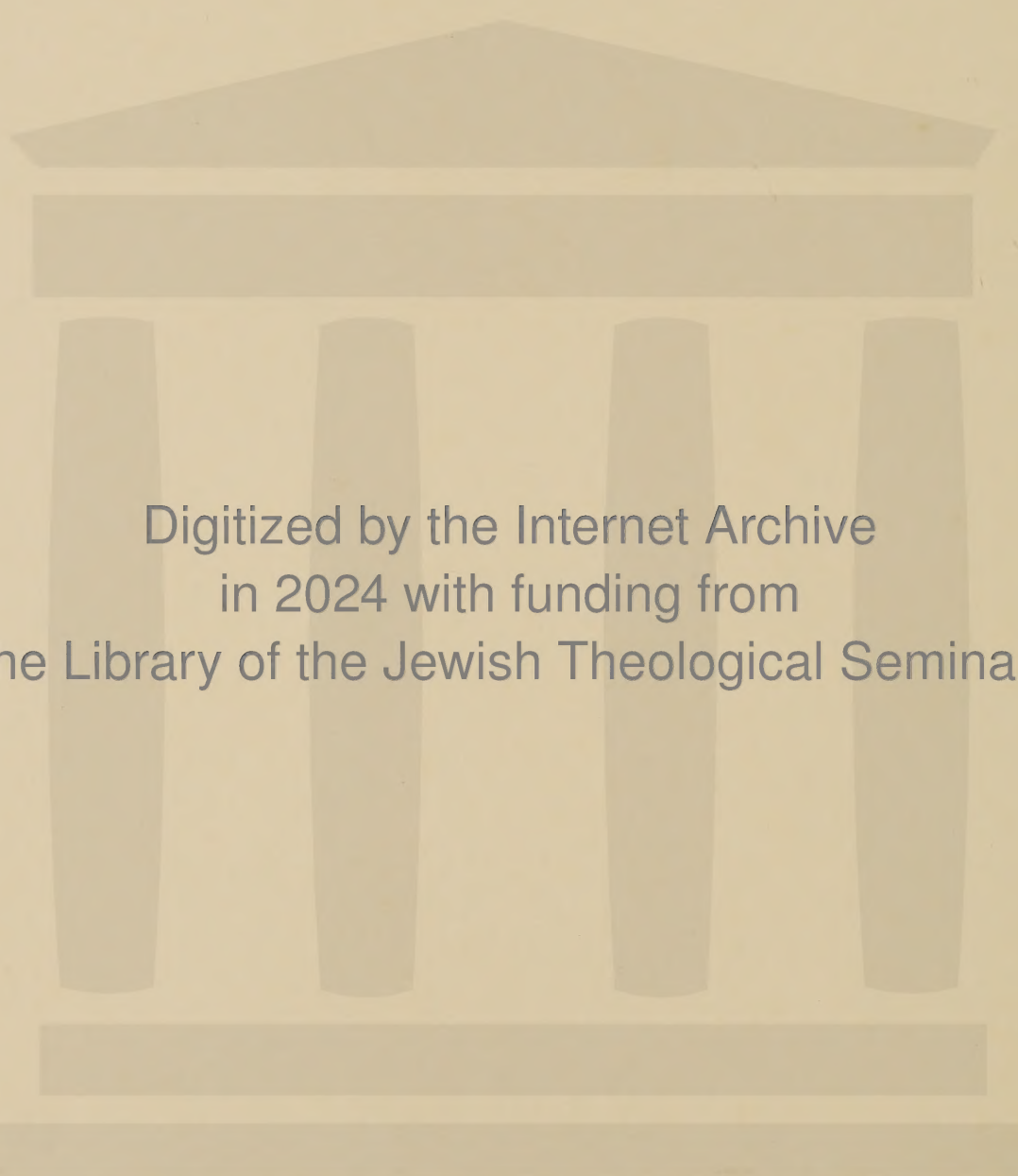


M. KAPLAN DIARIES - TRANSCRIPTIONS

⑨ 1921 MAY 20 - 1922 DEC 7



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Wise showed himself very friendly. I have always admired and believed in him despite the tradition among our people and especially in the Seminary that you can not be a good Jew without disparaging Wise. If God will spare me and give me health I may be officially connected with the Jewish Institute for Religion by next year.

* * *

Friday, May 20, 1921

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I attended yesterday the conference of a number of Baale-Batim called for the purpose of hearing from Dr. Weitzmann and Judge ^{Mack} ~~March~~ debate the issue of the controversy between the World Zionist Organization and the Zionist Organization of America. The meeting was held in a room belonging to the Arkwright Club, 320 Bway. Judge Rosalsky opened the meeting at 3:30 with a few remarks prepared for him by Dr. Benderly who has been doing the actual work of getting the conference together. There were present about thirty men, five women, and representing the W.Z.O. Weitzmann, Ussischkin with two secretaries, and on behalf of the A.Z.A. Judge Mack, Prof. Felix Frankfurter and two secretaries. The meeting lasted until 12 midnight.

Mack was called upon first. He spoke for nearly two hours. He began with a resentful denunciation of the charge made against the American Zionist leaders that they were not Jews, that they knew nothing, had read nothing and learned nothing. He did not make clear just what was the ignorance he was charged with. The controversy, he said, had arisen at Paris where the various representatives of the Zionist movement met in 1919 to obtain favorable terms in the peace treaty for the Jews of the various countries. It was there that Zionists like Ussishkin urged that Jews must demand not only political equality but national rights. It was this conception that underlay the interpretation that the W.Z.O. gave to the Keren Hayesod. They regard the K.H. as a State Treasury, and demand implicit obedience in contributing to it.

* * * *

Friday, May 27, 1921

Mack then proceeded to explain why the A.Z.O. insisted upon having safeguards to secure the proper handling of funds. He dwelt upon the mishandling of funds that took place about a year ago when some of the funds that had to be turned over to the Jewish Distribution Committee were used for Zionist purposes. The basis for all these charges of inefficiency in the W.Z.O. is the report of the Palestine Reorganization Committee signed by Simon and DeLion.

Weizmann very adroitly answered the charges, either denying them or minimizing their significance. He was followed by Prof. Felix Frankfurter who in a two hour speech arraigned the ~~members~~ members of the World Executive Committee, especially Weizmann, as fickle and untrustworthy and therefore not qualified to demand implicit obedience on part of the American Organization. He in turn was followed by Ussischkin who in a half hour speech wanted to impress upon the audience that it made no difference to him what they thought since they represented ~~nobody~~ nobody in particular.

The debate was followed by a rather unsuccessful attempt to have both sides answer pointed questions submitted to them. Finally when it was getting late, Weizmann again delivered a moving speech in which he dwelt at great length upon the fact that an impassable gulf lay between him and the American Zionists. The most significant remark in his address was that if God forbid there ever was to be a conflict between England and Palestine, he would fight on the side of Palestine against England, whereas if a conflict were to break out between America and Palestine the American Zionists would be found on the side of America. Therein lay the difference between his Zionism and that of the American Zionists.

I thought this remark most ill-advised from every conceivable standpoint. I understand that it has since been deleted from the minutes.

When the hearing was over the Committee appointed a sub-committee to bring in a report that should represent its findings as a result of what it heard. The sub-committee went over to one of Child's Restaurants in W. 42nd. We did not get home before 2:00.

Saturday night and Sunday morning Lamport, Benderly and myself who were part of the sub-committee met and drew up a report which I presented to the entire Committee which met Sunday afternoon at the Center. We worked out that report in ~~xxx~~ the presence of Lindheim who is a majority member of the Executive Committee of the American Zionist Organization.

After a long discussion Sunday afternoon we had gotten into shape a report that seemed acceptable to every one present.

On Monday our sub-committee went to see Mack at the offices of the Z.O.A. In presenting the report I prefaced it with the following remarks:

The following considerations were borne in mind in the formulation and adoption of the report:

1. We were determined to get at the truth in the contentions of both sides of the controversy, and to be ^{as} just as possible to both without at the same time saying anything that might jeopardize the Zionist cause.

2. We were of the opinion that the Zionist cause would be jeopardized if we were to say anything that might be interpreted as undermining the authority of the W.Z.O. or as destroying the integrity of the A.Z.O.

3. We excluded from our discussions such fundamentals as had to do with questions of loyalty to Palestine or to the countries in which we lived.

4. We tried to confine ourselves to authorized statements and to attach no importance to the mis-en-scense of these statements since such mis-en-scense was a matter of subjective reconstruction.

The one difficulty that arose was whether the A.Z.O. should have anything to do with the K.H. office at present established at 55 Union Sq. Mack would not consider the resolution unless they were phrased in such a way as to allow the A.Z.O. to go on with a Keren Hayesod Campaign of its own. We rated that change forthwith. Morris Rottenberg who is a strong Weizmann partisan took exception to our action.

The next morning, (Tuesday, 12) we met Weizmann at the Comodore. We found him in smoker and slippers. He had gone to bed late after having come back from an out of town speaking tour. When we saw ^{him} he still looked weary and wan. I no sooner made my prefatory statement than he laid it down as a sine qua non that the office of the K.H. at 55 Union Sq. must be allowed to continue its work. He would not even hear of the A.Z.O. instituting a K.H. campaign of its own. He had with him Schmarya Levine and Neiditsch, the originator of the K.H. idea. Weizmann and Levine berated the leaders of the A.Z.O. as obstructionists. Finally in a very dramatic way Weizmann appealed to us as real Jews to help him against these obstructionists, instead of acting ^{as} impartial judges meting out judgment. He actually wept when he spoke of how he was sacrificing himself for the movement. He had nothing else in the world to live for. He addressed himself to me in particular. When I shook hands with him as I was about to leave he kissed me. Naturally I was very much overcome at this sign of weakness and helplessness on the part of Weizmann in the face of apathy and obstruction. As I left him I felt very much broken hearted at the thought that those among us who had the interests of our people at heart have become so alienated from each other in their Weltanschauungen and sympathies as to engage in bitter quarrels even when confronted with so urgent a task as the rebuilding of Palestine.

After we left Dr. Benderly suspecting that I might have been won over to Weizmann's side by this emotional outburst at the end of our conference, told me one or two things about Weizmann's actions at

the London Conference last July that inhibited me from going overboard completely for Weitzmann. Judge Brandeis had told Benderly of two incidents in which Weitzmann ^{has} figured, and which destroyed Brandeis' confidence in Weitzmann. 1) When B. came to London, W. came to him imploring him to save him from ruin. He was on the point of being forced out of the Executive of the W.Z.O. and Brandeis was the only man who could prevent that by nominating him as member of the Executive Comm. As the two other members of the Committee Brandeis was to nominate Sokolow and James De Rothschild. In order, however to get J. de Roth, to accept the nomination it was necessary for Brandeis to visit Baron Edmund, James' father and to get Edmund to persuade his son to accept the nomination. The visit was arranged through Felix Frankfurter. Brandeis broached the matter to James in the presence of his father Edmund. The father, however, ~~advised~~ advised strongly against going on the Executive Committee. Nevertheless he was open to conviction. Next morning Edmund telephoned to Brandeis saying that he reconsidered the question and was willing to abide by Brandeis' ~~saying that he reconsidered the question and was willing to~~ opinion. Brandeis, accordingly, was free to nominate James. That same day Weitzmann came to Brandeis to learn with what success Brandeis met in persuading James to accept the nomination. When W. heard from Brandeis that James was willing, W. was so overwhelmed with joy and thanks that he kissed Brandeis' hand. Not long after that the meeting of the nominating committee took place. Brandeis proposed as had been arranged between him and Weitzmann the names of Sokolow, Weitzmann and James de Rothschild. To his utter surprise Weitzmann got up and opposed the nomination of James de Rothschild. This so angered Brandeis that he left the meeting abruptly and was not to be found for three days. Only after a great deal of pleading did he yield to the request to return to the Conference.

The other incident was the one which gave rise to the idea of the Economic Council, an idea whereby Weitzmann frustrated the plan he

originally ^{had} given assent to and in accordance with which the Executive Committee was itself to become the economic agency of the Zionist movement. Brandeis was to be honorary president, but with actual voting power and was to go to Palestine each June and dedicate four months each year to affairs there. Lord Reading was the one that drew up the plan which was shown us in his own handwriting.

I was so disgusted with the whole controversy that I was not going to have anything more to do with it and advised Benderly to inform the Committee that we were unsuccessful in our attempt to bring the two sides together. But Rottenberg insisted upon our meeting Judge Mack once again and proposing to him to allow present K.H. office to go on with its work. We went to see Mack again yesterday (Thursday) at 5:20 in the Woolworth Building, where he has his Judges' Chambers. I told him of the fact that I realized, as I had never done before, that the Resolutions of the London Conf. called for the establishment of a separate K.H. office in each country, and that although I regarded the institution of the K.H. as distinct from the Executive Committee and the various Federations as fraught with evil, the A.Z.O. should have lived up to the Resolutions, and should have established the office. It could at the same time have urged that at the next Zionist Congress the K.H. should be completely subordinated to the Zionist organization instead of being connected with it simply by the fact that the incorporators happen to be Zionists. If the A.Z.O. had taken that attitude they would not have been regarded as obstructionists, and could more easily have convinced the people of the danger that lurked in the policy to separate the K.H. from the Zionist organization.

Mack was very tired after a day's work on the bench. He hardly had the patience to hear us out. When Bernard Semel suggested a plan whereby the fate of both the W.Z.O. and the A.Z.O. might be saved, Mack said "If you will get a statement to that effect from Weizmann over his

signature I shall take the matter up with my colleagues." To Rottenberg this looked like a concession; to me it appeared as an excuse to get rid of us. This is where the matter now stands.

May 27, 1921

* * *

This week the Center afforded me another ordeal. Last Sunday I was supposed to meet a Committee of three or four trustees for the purpose of talking over the terms upon which I was to continue as their rabbi. My meeting with that Committee was supposed to take place about half an hour before the meeting of the Committee on the Keren Hayesod controversy. When I came, there was no one there. Just as I was about to take part in the other meeting, I noticed that a small group of the trustees had gone off to another room to meet by themselves. By the time the other meeting was about to start Rosalsky who had been in conference with the small group of trustees showed me a set of resolutions which the Trustees will be called upon to pass at the meeting on the night following. The resolution read as follows:

"Whereas it is of vital importance to place a record in written form the religious principles which underly all the activities of our institution and whereas recent events have shown how easily misunderstandings arise when such clear expression of principles is lacking, Be it resolved that it is the sense of this Board that it go on record as reaffirming that the underlying religious principles of the Jewish Center were conceived in the spirit of orthodox Judaism, and Be it further resolved that in letter as well as in spirit, every activity of the Jewish Center shall be carried on in accordance with the principles of orthodox Judaism."

When I saw these resolutions I recognized at once that J. H. Cohen had drawn them up. Although I had anticipated friction and unpleasantness, I did not expect them so soon. These resolutions came as a shock to me after the apparently amicable understanding we had arrived at the previous week.

I was uncertain as to whether I should participate in the Board meeting on Monday night when these resolutions would be brought up for adoption. I did not take seriously the promise that Rothstein made to prevent their being brought up. Finally Unterberg persuaded me to keep away. At about 9:30 I received word from Unterberg that it might be necessary for me to come anyhow. As I got into the room where the meeting was taking place I was told that the Board was just going to send for me. I at once launched forth with my reasons for offering the resolutions. I told them that I could not understand how after having elected me as Rabbi the week before, knowing full well that I was not orthodox they could pass a resolution that every activity should be carried on in the letter as well as in the spirit of orthodoxy. Their answer was that as far as I was concerned I was at liberty to continue preaching as I had hitherto done. After considerable sparring I suggested that I would consent to the resolutions if they would accept the following amendment:

The Rabbi shall have the right to teach and preach in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

There was a howl when I read this amendment. They saw clearly that it counteracted the force of the resolutions. Moreover, how could they think of allowing the Rabbi to be guided simply by his conscience. Is he not bound by Jewish Law? I immediately saw J. H. Cohen point and readily incorporated the words, "shall have the right within Jewish Law." But that did not satisfy them. That did not imply that he must teach and preach Orthodoxy.

There was a great deal of wrangling for hours during which many bitter words escaped me, and a good deal of abuse heaped upon me especially by Ike Phillips. I was accused of being stubborn and selfish in insisting upon my amendment. I told them that if they opposed my amendment they automatically voted for accepting my resignation. That

promise of enabling Judaism to strike root in this country than any other. I am, it is true, contemplating to throw myself into the arms of Wise's following. Yet I am oppressed by misgivings lest my expectation of true spiritual survival in that direction turn out to be but dust and ashes.

Sunday, May 29, 1921

Last night Benderly, Rosalsky and Sam Lamport met at my house to consider the feasibility of organizing a committee that would ask Judge Brandeis to give up his seat on the Bench of the Supreme Court.

* * * * *

Wednesday, June 15, 1921 (Long Branch)

A week ago last Thursday (Juen 2) seven of us (Benderly, Rosalsky, Rothstein, Rottenberg, Semel, Sam Lamport and I) went to Washington with the purpose of urging Brandeis to resign from the Supreme Court and to become the visible leader of the Zionist movement in this country. The seven of us were crowded into one compartment of a Pullman. We spent the greatest part of the time in telling all sorts of funny stories. Just about an hour before we arrived in Washington we began to discuss the purpose of our trip. We soon realized that there was no unanimity among us as to the fundamental issues involved in the controversy and as to the statement we were to present to Brandeis. The troublesome one in the group was Rottenberg. He showed himself a determined Weizmannist. Benderly hoped to bring the discussion to a head by pointing out that there were three distinct phases to the controversy -- principles, policies and persons. He suggested that I formulate the principles involved. Before I got very far we had to leave the train. We continued our discussion at the Hotel Washington where we were to stay overnight.

* * * * *

Thursday, June 16, 1921

The next morning the seven of us went to the home of Judge Brandeis. We arrived on the minute of 9:00 and we were ushered into his study. Judge Rosalsky made a few introductory remarks in which he alluded to our having been very much troubled by the controversy and to our efforts to bring about an understanding, which have failed. He then called upon me to set forth specifically the purpose of our mission. The following is a summary of what I said:

We represent no organization and have not been authorized by any organization to carry out the mission for which we have come to you. We are a handful of Jews taken at random from the large mass of synagogue Jews who look upon the Zionist movement as a means of bringing about the fulfilment of our age long prayer for the restoration of Zion. At the same time we recognize our indebtedness to America for having given us the opportunity to achieve material success and the only way we can express our gratitude to her is by countenancing nothing in our lives that might in the least impugn our loyalty toward her.

We have had occasion to get an insight into the Zionist problem through our attempt to learn what was involved in the Keren Hayesod controversy. It did not take us long to realize that issues of a fundamental character divided the European from the American Zionists. After reflecting upon these issues we arrived ~~at~~ at the following conclusions:

1. The integrity and authority of the World Zionist Organization as the political representative and economic agency of the Jews must be upheld.

2. We look upon the World Zionist Organization as a means to an end and not as end in itself. With this in mind we are bound to conclude that the policies of the W.Z.O. must be directed solely toward

the accomplishment of that end. Nothing is so essential toward the achievement of that purpose as enlisting the aid of as large a number of our people as possible. To bring that about the lowest common denominator of Jewish interest should be sought out in all types of Jews and made use of for the upbuilding of Palestine. The lowest common denominator is the desire to establish in Palestine an economically self supporting Jewry. No Jew can possibly take exception to such an aim. That aim therefore, should be the one to which the Z.O. should devote itself.

3. A second corollary which follows from our conception of the W.Z.O. merely as a means rather than an end in itself is the freedom of each local Zionist organization to further that end in its way, and in a manner compatible with the spirit of the country to which it belongs. Being only a means to an end the W.Z.O. must not take the attitude that loyalty to it is not merely a means of administrative efficiency but qualification for being a full fledged Jew. We regard such an attitude as productive of a type of Jewish chauvinism that might compromise our position in the countries of our adoption.

We consider the American Zionist Organization as being in a position to ward off the danger of making the Zionist Organization an end in itself. But to bring about that result it must be visibly directed and guided by you. This would involve your giving your entire time and energy to the movement. We feel we have a right to ask of you to make that sacrifice because nothing could be more calamitous than for the Jews to fail to take advantage of the opportunity to reclaim Palestine an opportunity that may never come to us again. America too cannot begrudge ^{your making} him such a sacrifice on behalf of the Jews, especially now that all the countries of the world, America herself included, have shut their doors against the Jews.

Brandeis complimented me on having set forth clearly the issues of the controversy. After making the same points as the foregoing

in other language he stated that there was no need for his coming out openly as the leader of the American Zionists, since he gave to the movement all that was expected of a leader that is, the laying down of policies and the direction of affairs. He stated that he gave all of his leisure time to Zionism. More he could not do. He did not care to come before mass meetings, for he was of the conviction that the time for mass meetings was over, and that no good could come out of them.

Some of the other members of the committee then took up the word. Benderly especially urged him to adopt our suggestion because of the effect it would have on the indifferentists. Sam Lamport put in a word. I made use of Brandeis' statement that England was watching to see whether the American Jews would succeed in having their point of view prevail in the reconstruction of Palestine, to ask him whether the failure of the American viewpoint at the Cleveland Convention that was to take place next Sunday would not produce a bad effect in quarters where it might harm the cause.

But all of our pleading was of no avail. He insisted that being convinced as we were of the justice of the American Zionist viewpoint we should go to Cleveland together with a few more of our original committee to put the case before the delegates of the convention. We would not be regarded as meddlers, since such procedure is customary in the political national conventions.

We had not come to Washington to be told to go to Cleveland for that purpose; so we immediately started for home. While on the train it dawned upon me that De Haas played a trick on us. He was anxious that we should go to Cleveland, to urge the delegates to uphold the administration. He thought that by getting Brandeis to talk to us, we would be persuaded to go to Cleveland for that purpose. But how ~~was~~ was De Haas to get us to see Brandeis? This he apparently solved

by leading us to believe that Brandeis' resignation depended upon our coming to ask him to make that sacrifice for Zionism and promising him support. If that was De Haas' game, it would be an excellent reason for our questioning the sincerity of the administration.

In my estimation Brandeis is a remarkable replica of Wilson as the latter is described in the recent book by Keynes. Though apparently high minded he is too much of a stickler for abstract principles. He seems moreover to suffer from the inability to emancipate himself from the influence of his minions, or to judge them at their true worth.

I came out with my family on Tuesday, June 7, 1921 to West End, N.J., 310 Norwood Avenue for the summer.

On Friday night, June 10, I received a telegram from ^{Weitzmann}~~Washington~~ ~~him~~ saying that he was anxious to get into touch with me. He spoke to me by phone on Monday at 2:35 P.M.

There were two matters he wanted to talk to me about. The first was the request he received from the British Government to name a Jew to serve on the International commission to take charge of the Holy Places in Palestine. He wanted me to consider accepting the position which might involve my living in Palestine. The Commission is to consist of six men, two Jews, two Christians and two Mohammedans.

The second matter had to do with the Keren Hayesod. He wanted to know whether I would consent to serve on the Advisory Board of the K.H. I gave my consent.

* * * *

September 21, 1921

I spent a pleasant summer in West End (310 Norwood Ave.) despite the fact that I suffered from a nose cold until about July 20. I cannot say that I accomplished very much, though I did the best I

I could in the way of reading and thinking. I came to realize as I never did before that ^{of} more importance for a modern reinterpretation of Judaism than a pragmatic theory of religion in general is a reconstruction as far as possible of the actual manner in which the God idea is developed in Israel. This necessitated my going back to Kittel, Gressman and other writers of that type. The aim, therefore, I have set to myself - that of formulating a working theory of Judaism - seems as remote as ever.

The monotony of my stay in West End was broken by my meeting a group of young people once a week for eight weeks in succession. Their names are as follows: Arthur Rubin, Mr. & Mrs. Moe Epstein, Miss Evelyn Garfield, Misses Sarah and Isabel Kittay, Mr. Fabian, Mr. Melnick, Miss Esther (?) Garfunkel, Mrs. Schnur, Mrs. Mendes, Mr. Rosenblatt (oldest son of Cantor Rosenblatt). I gave them the results of my study of the development of the God idea in Israel, starting with the Buddle-Gressman assumption that Israel took Job...from the Kenites. The historic presentation appealed to the young folks immensely as, I am sure, no abstract presentation of the problem of religion as such could have done. Some of them with their keen powers of analysis and challenging questions made it necessary for me to keep my thinking cap on all the time. I was especially delighted with my nephew Arthur Rubin whose company I enjoyed more than that of many an older person.

I was asked by Garfunkel to occupy the pulpit of the Long Branch Synagogue at a Sabbath service, but I persistently refused because he had found it necessary to yield to pressure from some people in that congregation who are identified with the Down Town Yeshivah and to invite students and graduates of that institution to preach. I suppose I was petty in taking such a stand, but I could not bring myself to pass in review together with a log of ignorant young boys, who as a rule, made it their business to attack all liberalism in thought

and action, not because of profound conviction, for they were entirely too immature and too ignorant to have any convictions, but because of professional rivalry. I did consent, however, to interpret the Perek on two successive Sabbaths, August 20 and 27.

The situation at the Center cast its shadow across the summer to some extent. From the information that I received from David I could see that J.H. Cohen was dealing high handedly in dismissing teachers and appointing others in their stead. It began to dawn upon me that Cohen was out after my scalp and that no half measures would content him. He was, I now began to realize, determined to make it so uncomfortable for me that I would not be able to hold out any longer. I stated this to Judge Rosalsky who came to see me some time in August and I put it up to him not to permit Cohen to have his way. I made it clear to Rosalsky that only on one condition should he take up cudgels on my behalf, and that is if he sincerely believed that I was right in my attitude toward Orthodoxy. He replied that he was fully in agreement with my views, and was willing to do everything in his power ^{to} insure my stay and victory in the Center. He kept his promise by interesting Unterberg, Liebovitz, Joe Levy and Sam Lamport. These few have been deliberating what action to take, but so far are lying low awaiting developments.

Since I returned to the city on Thursday, Sept. 8, new developments have already taken place. I am beginning to doubt J.H. Cohen's honesty. I discovered that he carried out a piece of trickery which is gradually opening my eyes to the fact that I am dealing with a self-deluded ~~man~~ hypocrite and not with an honest fanatic. On looking over the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees which took place on May 20, 1921, I came across a reference to a resolution which was described as having been presented, discussed and unanimously carried to the following effect:

Resolved that the educational system of the Jewish Center be placed under the direction and control of a committee to be known as the School Board to be appointed by the Board of Trustees and to be responsible to the Board of Trustees. At regular intervals, reports of the progress of the work in the educational system of the Center are to be submitted to the membership body.

I had to read the foregoing several ~~times~~ times before I believed my own eyes. I could not for the life of me recall any such resolution having been submitted or voted on. I at once got busy and tried to arrange for a conference with Cohen, Fischman, Rothstein. While the conference was being arranged for I learned from Davis that Lamport had dictated to him the minutes of that meeting, he (Davis) not having been present at it. I thereupon asked Lamport also to come to the conference.

We met on Monday night (Sept. 19). When I stated my case they at first tried to deny my charge that no such resolution had ever been presented. Afterwards they contended that the resolution represented the sense of the meeting on May 20, and, that therefore, while I was technically right, I was actually wrong in maintaining that the committee with which I agreed to cooperate was merely to look after the Orthodoxy of the instruction. They insisted that I ^{had} completely abdicated all control of the educational work. They almost talked me into believing that I did such thing. But, fortunately, I have the conversations and discussions on that point recorded in the previous part of this book (see pp). From what I say there I see that it never entered my mind to confine my activity in the center to preaching. I can see now how it is possible to torture people into confessing to crimes which they had never committed.

Rosalsky has since disclosed to me that Lamport dictated the minutes to David with Cohen's knowledge and that Cohen mumbled to

himself while I was presenting my case last ~~Thurs~~ Monday "The cancer must be cut out," alluding to me as the cancer of the center.

* * * *

Thursday, September 22, 1921

On Tuesday, (Sept. 20) I wrote to Fischman asking that the Center grant me a leave of absence until Tishre 5683, the leave of absence to go into effect immediately after the coming holidays.

* * *

September 26, 1921

A rather good resume of the circumstances that led to my resigning from the Center together with thirty-five members who formed the initial group of the S.A.J. is to be found in the minute book of the S.A.J.

Fischman said to me this morning that he was afraid to talk to me because he knew I kept a diary. - I sent in my resignation to the Center on Jan. 16, 1922. It was accepted the 18th.

* * * *

Wednesday, Mar. 10, 1922

The Society for the Advancement of Judaism was organized on Tuesday, Jan. 17. We held our first services at the meeting house, 41 West 86 Street on Friday night, January 27, 1922. Was elected leader for life Feb. 12, 1922.

* * * *

March 28, 1922

Yesterday afternoon Mrs. N. Lindheim who is now a member of the S.A.J. came to see me. She brought up the subject of Kashruth. She claimed that it would be a spiritual retrogression for her to introduce Kashruth into her home. While she could understand my

position in upholding the value of Kashruth, it would be absurd for her to assume a useless burden now that she is emancipated from it. Her belief in universalism and free social intercourse between Jew and Gentile was incompatible with the restrictions of the dietary laws. Besides, the insistence upon these restrictions alienates, in her opinion, young people who might otherwise have clung to Judaism.

I was hard put to it to defend the cause of Kashruth. I realize that if it were not for the environment in which I move I would probably have given it up as an obsolete institution. But then again, might I not have given up so much more besides. Is it, after all, so wrong to be the product of one's environment? Of course, if the traditional belief or institution which the environment approves is socially ^{harm-} ~~harm~~ful it is the duty of those who assume leadership to insist upon its elimination. If the dietary laws ^{had} had a demoralizing effect, if they had led to spiritual narrowness or even if they would have the effect of alienating worth while men and women from Judaism it would be my duty to urge their abrogation. But I cannot see wherein I am less broadminded or universalistic in my outlook because I have all my life abstained from "trefa" food. It seems to me that with the present lack of Jewish content nothing could be more fatal than to break down the principal fence against assimilation.

This does not settle the problem of Kashruth. There can be no question that sooner or later Judaism will have to get along without dietary laws. I, for my own part, believe that in Kashruth as well as in other ritual laws the insistence in the future will have to be upon the positive aspect and not upon the negative. That is to say, Jews should be urged to demand meat that is prepared according to ritual law in preference to "trefa" meat. But where they cannot have their choice, as when they are in Gentiles' houses, or anywhere away from home, they should not be expected to abstain from "trefa" (in the rabbinic sense).

In the evening I went to the YWHA building where I had called a meeting of representatives of congregational schools and other religious schools affiliated with philanthropic institutions, for the purpose of considering the organization of a Jewish School Board to back up the License Board. Only one congregation - the one at Arverne - sent delegates. How symptomatic of the deadening apathy toward Jewish education! I dread to think of what portends of the Jewish future in this country.

Of the three delegates present there was one Bantler, an Austrian Jew, who had received his education in Berlin and who came to this country about six years ago. He is of the standard Judaeo-German orthodox type for which Frankfurt-Am-Mein is noted. His boy who is not yet thirteen has been taught to specialize in the art of reading the ^Torah - which is nothing but a mechanical performance. In the course of the conversation I had with this mechanical orthodox Jew, he told me of some of the questions which his boy put to him as he was teaching him Shulhan Arukh - the favorite study of all Jewish Frankfurters abroad and here. One question had to do with the observance of the Sabbath. Since it says that he who keeps the Sabbath is as though he had observed all the Mizvoth, then why not content oneself with keeping the Sabbath. The other question had to do with the washing of the hands. Why should the fact that one has failed to wash his hands cause him to forget all he has studied, if he happens to be a "Talmid Haham?"

When I said to Bantler in reference to the second question that the ancients entertained a wrong notion as to the effect of the washing of the hands, he was rather shocked at this implication that it was possible for the ancients to be mistaken.

Last Sabbath a week ago (March 18) I inaugurated the ceremony of the ^{p. 710/32} ~~at~~ at the S.A.J. Meeting House (41 West 86 St.) about which more details later. My daughter Judith was the first one to have her ^{p. 710/32} ~~celebrated~~ celebrated there.

In the afternoon of that Sabbath I spoke at the Free Synagogue House to a group of teachers. Rabbi Wise and his ~~xxxxxx~~ assistants were also present. My subject was "The Pragmatic Interpretation of the Bible."

I am thinking of getting out a monthly publication similar in form to that of Elbert Hubbard's Philistine. In trying to enlist the aid of collaborators I called upon Dr. Louis Finkelstein. He turned me down apparently because he is afraid that in cooperating with me he might compromise himself with his congregation.

It is a hard world.

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Thursday, April 27, 1922

I am just now in the throes of another moral conflict. I went to see Dr. Stephen S. Wise last Saturday. In the course of the conversation he asked me whether I would be willing to join the faculty which he is organizing for the Jewish Institute of Religion. I would have grasped the opportunity with both hands if it had come last January before I organized the Society for the Advancement of Judaism. Now however, I am afraid that the Society would break up if I were to accept Wise's offer. Most of those who left the Center for my sake would feel, I am afraid, that I betrayed them. It is true that I had made clear to them that I was through with orthodoxy, and that I was contemplating working out a new mode of Jewish adjustment. But, I doubt

whether they suspected how radical I was in my views. Giving up the Seminary and accepting a position at the Jewish Institute of Religion that is to be presided over by Wise would shock them into a clear realization of how far removed I am from what is probably their notion of me, for Wise is to most of them the last word in Jewish heterodoxy.

I have in fact been feeling very uncomfortable at the slowness with which the Society has been progressing toward the goal that I have in mind, the goal of a dynamic socialized Judaism. The only thing I have succeeded in so far has been to change the phrasing in that part in the ritual where the return of the sacrificial service is petitioned for. Instead of praying for the restoration of animal sacrifices, the version, as I have altered it, simply recites the fact that in the past these sacrifices constituted a means of communion with God. The reason for retaining such historic allusion to a mode of service that is obsolete is that the historic continuity of Israel is thus emphasized.

But even this slight change I have introduced in a manner that might be characterized as surreptitious. I have not announced it or explained it to the congregation. I have only asked the Cantor to read the service with these changes. Most of the people have their minds on other things while the Cantor recites the Amidah, and therefore are really unaware of what I have done with the text.

When it came, however, to a more visible change there was protest and the protesters have had their way. I wanted that men and women should not be divided off as is done in the orthodox synagogues. I believe that there is no reasonable excuse for continuing the custom of separating the sexes during prayer nor that men and women sit promiscuously at all other functions social and educational. But the organizers, men like Joseph Levy, Abe Liebovitz, were afraid that seating men and women together might identify us as reformed Jews and so we have men and women sitting separately.

If I were sure that the Society would continue despite my taking the position at Wise's Institute, I would probably not hesitate about accepting his offer, although I would deplore losing the friendship of men like Joseph Levy and Abe Liebovitz. ^{It} ~~It~~ put the question to H. L. Simmons, who was more active than any one else in bringing about the organization of the Society. He encouraged me to go ahead and not mind the possible resignation of ten or a dozen of our present membership. When I broached the matter to Sam Lubell, however, I was very much impressed by his contention that I should not identify myself with Wise, because it would at once stamp me in the mind of everybody as extremely radical. Though as far as he was concerned, he said, he was willing to follow wherever I lead, but the others would break away.

Mrs. Lindheim, who is more responsible than any one else in getting Wise to think of me as a desirable man on his staff, has been very urgent in her plea that I throw all scruples to the wind. With Orthodoxy intransigent and blind, with Reform spiritually and Jewishly dessicated, there is a chance now to bring about a realignment of those forces in Jewish life that still hold out some promise of making for a Jewish future. She came to see me about it last Monday and again today. She argued so persuasively that I was unable to advance any plausible reason for continuing in my present position. I had to confess that if I failed to take advantage of the opportunity offered me now, it would be a sign of moral and spiritual weakness.

Will I have the courage to cross the Rubican of my career?

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Friday, April 28, 1922

A typical illustration of the moral conflicts that continually arise in my life is the following:

Last night I met for the third time a group of girls that are about to graduate from the Extension Department of the Teachers

Institute. Before proceeding with the subject I was going to speak about I asked them whether they had any questions that they wanted to put to me.

One of the girls (Miss Ephraim) then said to me, "I am faced with the following problem: I am of the opinion that riding should be permitted on the Sabbath. I, therefore, use the car on the Sabbath when I have to get to the school where I teach. This does not mean that I fail to sympathize with those parents who consider it wrong to ride on the Sabbath. What, then, am I to do in teaching the children? Shall I tell them that using the car is not wrong? I know that I would offend the parents. On the other hand, to tell them that it is not permitted I would be false to myself."

I told her frankly that she was misplaced in teaching in that school, because, if the parents were to know that she rode, they would certainly not permit her to teach their children.

Then another girl interposed and said that although she herself does not come from an orthodox home and she has never had any scruples about riding on the Sabbath, she nevertheless finds herself misplaced in having to teach in a "reform" school, because the children have not the least desire to know anything about Jewish life, and she has great difficulty in getting them to repeat a Hebrew word. She would much prefer to teach in a school like the one where Miss Ephraim teaches.

The former (Miss Ephraim) teaches in Rabbi Drob's school (Washington Heights) the latter in Rabbi Mishkind's (Reform Congr. in W. Bronx.

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Monday, May 1, 1922

It does not look as though I am going to take the step that might emancipate me for the larger life and the greater contribution

that I might make to the cause of Judaism. The main consideration that prevents me from accepting Wise's offer is that the Society for the Advancement of Judaism which I brought into existence three months ago would be wrecked. I talked the matter over with a few of my closest friends, J. H. Rubin, Harry Simmons, Dr. Isidore Rubin, Sam Lubell and Joseph Levy. Every one of them would have been heartily in favor of my joining Wise, so advanced are they in their views of Judaism, even J.H. Rubin and Joseph Levy, but the fear of the consequences to the organization is too strong for them to overcome. The only ones whom such fear did not affect were Simmons and Dr. Rubin, who at heart would not mind seeing Judaism reduced to a minimum.

This afternoon I had one of those experiences with the Seminary authorities that make me wish I could throw my Seminary job into the faces of Adler and the Trustees.

In the last report I made to Adler of the work at the Teachers Institute I happened to include the curriculum of the Post Graduate Department, I organized last year. In that curriculum mention is made of the fact that the courses in Hebrew are devoted to an intensive study of Ahad Haam and to extensive study of modern Hebrew Belles-Lettres. The mere mention of these facts to Adler is like waving a red flag before a bull. He is one of those fanatical anti-Zionists who cannot bear the mention of anything that has to do with the modern Jewish Renaissance without getting hot under the collar. In presenting my report, therefore, at a meeting of the Board of Trustees about three months ago he raised the question why I permitted so much time to be spent upon modern Hebrew. He asked that the special committee in Teachers Institute which had not been functioning for the last few years meet me to discuss this question. The meeting was to have taken place about six weeks ago but was postponed on account of Adler's illness.

After great difficulty it took place today at Stroock's office at 2:00 P.M. Felix M. Warburg said he had only twenty minutes time. The others, Judge Greenebaum, Stroock and Adler remained throughout the meeting. Warburg was interested only in hearing what I had to say about the various Jewish educational organizations and their relations to one another. I presume he was approached in reference to giving support to the Jewish Educational Association which I was in a way instrumental in organizing, but from which I have kept away, or been made to keep away, ever since the trouble with the Center came to a head. Warburg apparently wanted to learn from me whether there was overlapping of educational effort.

In the course of my explanation I made mention of the License Board which worked out standards for the different grade of teachers and, I added that the graduates of the Teachers Institute were granted "B" licenses upon their receiving diplomas from the Institute. This furnished Adler the clue to launch his attack against the practice of regulating our work by requirements set up outside of the Institute. He denounced such practice as yielding to the Soviet spirit which has been introduced by Benderly in conjunction with undue emphasis upon modern Hebrew and a secular tendency in all of the instruction. I could at once see what I was up against. The ghost of Schechter seemed to have returned to plague me for having taken advantage of his absence for a year when he went to Africa and having formed an alliance with Benderly. The other members of the committee supported Adler's contention. Stroock seemed to have been of the impression that all of modern Hebrew Literature is anti-religious and pornographic. Greenebaum saw no use in Hebrew. He was interested in religion and ethics. The fact that the Jewish Vorwaits is written in Hebrew characters does not alter the fact that it is objectionable was one of Greenebaum's ^{previous} sayings.

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When I saw myself attacked and criticized I got into a temper and told them that I did not think it was right for them after displaying so little interest in the work of the Institute and never keeping in touch with it, to place me on the defensive every time they met with me. I told them bluntly that the Trustees of the Seminary did not interfere with the curriculum of the Seminary. I saw no reason why they should interfere with the curriculum that was worked out by the faculty at the Teachers Institute. They replied in kind, and said that they had a right to know the policy of the T.I. and that they were not merely rubber stamps. I told them that if they had no confidence in me that I was conducting the institution along the proper lines I was ready to resign.

After a while the heat of the discussion subsided. I grew calmer and so did they. Nothing definite was arrived at. I did not even get a chance to ask for a larger allowance for the extension courses which they seemed to approve of as doing just the work they would like to see the T.I. do in contrast with the intensive courses of the Teachers Training Department.

Here is my situation. I am in the center of a four cornered fight. At one corner the orthodox abuse me and the Teachers Institute as turning out heretics and non-observant teachers. At the second corner are the Hebraists who claim that we send out men and women who are totally ignorant of Hebrew and Hebrew Literature. Our teachers are only good for what they term the "religious schools of the 'Yahudim'". At the third corner are the members of the ~~Faculty~~ Faculty of the Institute who resent any kind of religious emphasis as being ecclesiastical and would have the Institute turned into a school for Jewish nationalism. And finally Adler and the Trustees who want the Institute to give public school teachers a few lessons in Jewish religion and ethics and lessons in translating the order of prayer. This is their idea of the type of teachers we ought to train.

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Friday, May 5, 1922

Last night I told Wise that I could not accept his offer. I gave him the excuse that I was unwilling to part with the Teachers Institute after all the work that I had put into it. I said that I was sure that the Seminary authorities would reduce the Institute to a course for the training of Sunday School teachers if I were to resign. It was my duty to stay where I was, unless the authorities so interfered with my work as to make it impossible for me to carry out my purpose or asked my resignation outright. I hinted that such a pass might come about sooner than expected.

I really did not want my refusal to be taken as final, and Dr. Wise chimed in by adding that he considered the matter of acceptance as suspended rather than concluded in the negative.

I do not give myself credit for having acted very heroically. I certainly am in bondage. The only thing that can emancipate me is a systematic presentation of what I consider the necessary reconstruction of Judaism. But for that unfortunately I do not possess sufficient literary ability. I shall, with God's help, however, make every effort to set to work on that task. Perhaps I shall be privileged to see the conclusion of that task. May God give me strength.

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Wednesday, May 10, 1922

Last Monday night I attended the farewell dinner given to Dr. Magnes by the Jewish Education Association at Unterberg's house. I did not want to accept the invitation but both Unterberg and Magnes urged me to come. The reason I hesitated was because my presence has not been welcome at the Association during the last few months on account of my possibly keeping out from the organization men like Fischman and others of the Jewish Center.

The gathering presented a sobering contrast to those that used to take place in Unterberg's house seven, eight and nine years ago, when Magnes was in the prime of his glory, when he was the cynosure of all who had been hoping that he would bring order out of the chaos of Jewish life. Is this anti-climax in his career an evidence of his inability to lead or of Jewry's inability to be made to function normally? Here is how he diagnosed his own case:

"Despite the numerous friends it has been my privilege to win I have felt lonely. My friends who are identified with Jewish religious activity could not sympathize with my yearning for freedom to express my passionate desire for righteousness and peace. My radical friends failed to see why I loved Jewish traditions, Jewish history and the Jewish land with a consuming intensity. At one time I contemplated establishing a platform where, totally unattached to any organization, I could express myself freely. But it is in order to refrain from carrying out that purpose that I am leaving, for I know that I might have in that way saved my own soul, but I would have said things, that might have hurt or might have prejudiced the cause of the Jewish community."

The foregoing sums up the reasons for Magnes' inability to adjust himself to his environment. There can be no question that he shares such inability with those who have turned out to be the prophets of humanity. He undoubtedly possesses traits which in another age than ours might have led to his gathering about him a band of ardent disciples and he would have gone down in history as a Jewish seer. But it seems that the days for prophecy are over. We realize that as far as holding up the ideal we cannot improve upon the ancient seers. What we need now is men who imbued with the passion of the prophets, are also gifted with the wisdom and the knowledge of how we might attain those long heralded ideals of peace and righteousness. The only way

to be effective as a prophet nowadays, when one does not have the necessary knowledge of the ways and means of carrying out one's ideals is to suffer martyrdom, like the Sinn Feiners, I.W.W. leaders and the pacifists who are languishing in the prisons years after the armistice has been concluded. But to have Warburg praise you as a delightful fellow, and to be in a position to throw off all responsibilities and go travelling and observing the world is not compatible with the martyrdom that we usually expect from the prophets.

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Monday, May 22, 1922

Last night the SAJ gave a dinner and dance. Before the affair began I was in good spirits. When I thought of the fact that at last I have succeeded in actually building up an organization that came as near to being my own creation as I could ever expect, I believed for the moment that my effectiveness was demonstrated. But my ardor cooled off when I came to the Meeting House. I was disappointed in the small attendance. The people with whom I sat at table never mentioned a word about the organization, as though it had never existed. The main topic of conversation was golf. I was bored to death.

When the dinner was over Harry Simmons asked me to speak. He never so much as said a word about the organization. His main object in calling upon me was not so much to get them to think a little about our aims but mainly that I might humor them along preparatory to their leaving for their summer resorts. I was not in the mood for entertaining. Instead ~~and~~ I was prosy and preachy. I went back home thoroughly disappointed.

On top of this disappointment a committee consisting of Prof. Gottheil, Rev. Dr. Maurice Harris and Mr. Thurman came to see

me today with the view of inducing me to accept the position on the faculty of Wise's Institute of Religion. They were sent by the Board of Trustees of that Institution. I wish I were really deserving of the confidence they expressed in my ability to save our people from the moral and spiritual disintegration. Hurman pleaded so earnestly that if I had the courage to be true to my convictions I would have accepted the offer right there and then. But what is the use? I am apparently doomed to go through life like Hamlet, a victim of weak will and indecision, knowing full well what I ought to do to be of greatest service to the Jewish cause, yet held back by fears and scruples that a truly strong man would have swept away as so many cobwebs.

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Thursday, May 25, 1922

I have been struggling all day to start writing out the statement of the Society's aims but without success. This inability to write fluently is my greatest source of worry. I pray to God that He enable me to overcome this obstacle in the way of my serving the course of Judaism.

Last Tuesday a few of the Trustees of the Society met to discuss plans for the High Holiday services which are to take place at the Leslie Rooms. I was pleasantly surprised to hear them suggest that men and women be seated together instead of separately during the services at the Leslie Rooms. J. Levy, Winer and Israel Unterberg whom the rest believed would oppose such a change were absent from the meeting. Next day, however, when I talked to J. Levy about the proposed change I found him quite ready to accede. I do not know to what to attribute the ease with which the suggestion to have mixed seating was adopted, whether to their own realization that it is absurd to maintain a custom that is so out of keeping with the attitude assumed toward

woman today, and that is so much of a hindrance to active participation in the prayer on the part of every member of the family or to the fact that recently Dr. E. L. Solomon, a colleague of mine in the ministry, who had always been regarded as orthodox accepted a call to a congregation in the neighborhood, which has abolished the separate seating of the men and women.

The suggestion in our case had not yet been formally adopted. A special meeting to consider its adoption has been called for next Monday.

Seeing that the members of the Board are beginning to act upon their convictions, I proposed another change, to substitute for the "Kol Nidre" a prayer that is really in keeping with the spirit of the Day of Atonement. I considered the "Kol Nidre" paragraph as entirely out of place and beneath the level of truly spiritual religion. The contents, if understood, are amenable to misconstruction, and in no way conducive to the elevation of the soul. I would preserve the melody, but not the words of the "Kol Nidre."

Yesterday Rabbi Solomon Goldman of Cleveland came to see me. He is one of the graduates of the Seminary upon whom I have exercised a considerable influence. He attributes his success in a large measure to the point of view that he acquired from me. He too urged me strongly to accept Wise's offer. But the more I have been thinking about the matter the more I feel that I could accomplish just as much where I am now as when I would join the ~~faculty~~ faculty of the Institute of Religion, if I would only publish my views. I really am not in the least afraid of the consequences that would follow a frank and open statement of my ideas on Judaism. If the Seminary ~~would~~ ^{will} find it necessary then to ask me to resign, I would be only too glad to do so. But such a resignation should come at a time when my position on Judaism will have been clearly formulated.

Lena at once accepted the invitation. When they left Lena urged me to join her. She was sure she could get passage for me as well. Next morning she did.

It was interesting to note the reaction of our kiddies when the subject of our going to Europe was discussed that Saturday night. When Lena stated that she was determined to go Selma burst out crying. When I demurred and Lena said she would not go without me Judith burst out crying. She thought I was cruel in depriving her mother of a remarkable opportunity to see Europe.

Truth to tell I was really reluctant to take the trip. I had planned to devote a good part of the summer to writing and here I was to be interrupted again. Neither was I in a mood to incur the inconvenience due to eating Kosher. But seeing that Lena was anxious to go I felt I had no right to deprive her of the pleasure that the trip would afford her. My earnings have not been such as to enable us to indulge in travel. To block her in the attainment of her frequently expressed wish to see Europe again when all I had to do was to readjust my plans for the summer seemed hoggish to me, and I therefore yielded.

A week ago last Monday we visited the Spielbergs and after having heard from them that they would make it possible for us to take the trip without paying anything for the passage, we decided to take advantage of their generous offer.

The ship was scheduled to sail on Saturday, 2:00 P.M. from Pier 18 Brooklyn. This necessitated our stopping at a Brooklyn hotel on Friday before sundown. Isidore took us there with his automobile.

I cannot help stopping at this point to say a word about Isidore. [To say that I am fortunate in having Lena for a wife is but to express publicly my gratitude to God for having enabled me to achieve things and to develop spiritually to an extent that would never have been possible to me with a woman of another type. If she had

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done nothing else but display the patience she does with (my mother, God bless her (Wed. Oct. 8, 1930)) she would have done enough to earn my lifelong devotion. In addition her entire family have been so good to me and to her that I only sorry that there are not many more lucky ones like me.] Brothers in the flesh could not have shown themselves more devoted than Jake and Max. With Isidore I thought at first that I would not get along well. He displayed a certain antipathy to things Jewish that I resented. We almost came to blows once. But he has the remarkable Rubin trait of not bearing a grudge. After that one tilt we have been on the most cordial terms. He has married into the Unterberg family who lead a beautiful Jewish life, and he has been successful in his calling. True he can afford to be magnanimous yet that is no reason why I should fail to appreciate his attitude. While he is not intensely interested in the particular issues about which I have occasion to wrangle, he took an active part in helping me organize the SAJ.

To return to the story of our trip. The steamer did not pull out till 4:00 Sunday morning. About ten in the morning it stopped for a long time. She was found to have a leak. The rumor was circulated that she would return at once to her dock. Lena and I and I suppose a good many more passengers, were in a nervous condition. At twelve she resumed her sail, and has been going smoothly, though slowly since. Except for twelve hours we have so far had brilliant weather.

On Sunday night, June 11, the Alumni of the Teachers Institute celebrated the Decennial Anniversary of the first graduation from that institution. They held a banquet at the Seminary in honor of the occasion. Besides 150 graduates there were present nearly all the members of the Teachers Institute staff. Also Adler, Marx and Davidson of the Seminary faculty.

The idea of holding the banquet resulted from the efforts of some of the Alumni to create some kind of a moral and financial backing for the Teachers Institute. I had hoped that it might be possible to have each of the ten classes so far graduated contribute at least one scholarship and all the classes together raise \$10,000 in memberships. I soon found that that was beyond the reach of the Alumni. I wanted, however, that at least the foundation be laid for future effort. I suggested that they hold a banquet, and in that way at least consolidate whatever Alumni spirit might be generated in behalf of the Institute.

The banquet was very successful. The young people were very happy and I rejoiced with them. They got up a little souvenir booklet in which they paid me a far greater tribute than I deserved, considering the little time I devoted to the Institute as compared with the other instructors.

Monday, July 10, 1922 - S.S. Philadelphia

Every one of the addresses was interesting. I too succeeded in giving a spirited talk. The young people went away exhilarated.

I forgot to mention that the most entertaining feature of the evening was a written play composed by William Berkman in cooperation with Emily Deitchman. That play was a satire portraying the experiences of the Jewish teacher. There ran through it a vein of humor that set off to advantage the high standard of truth and idealism that I was represented as expecting from the Jewish teacher. I haven't laughed so heartily in years, as I did when I heard the play read.

A few days after the celebration I received a letter from Berkman in which he expressed a yearning to be given an opportunity to help create Jewish joy and atmosphere as he did that night. I asked him to come to see me, and as a result of the conversation I had with him I learned that he could be of great help to me together with many young people like him in carrying out the ideals of the S.A. J.

On Thursday, June 29, a committee consisting of Harry Simmons, Joseph Levy, A. Liebovitz and Nat Turwell brought me a check of \$5000 and pleaded with me that I should accept it for the services I had rendered to the SAJ. I persisted in refusing when Lena, who thought that it was some small gift they brought me in view of our contemplated trip, advised me not to be stubborn. After, however, when she learned of the true amount of the check, she agreed with me that I ought not to accept it. Accordingly I mailed it back to them together with a letter in which I stated that I shall consider it an honor to accept a salary from the SAJ as soon as it will number at least one hundred families.

Not being much of a traveler there were moments during this trip when my heart was in my mouth. Knowing that some of the boilers in the engine room are out of order I would at times lose confidence in the ability of the crew to bring the ship safely to her destination, especially when during the first few days she kept on losing instead of gaining speed. But since I learned that the steamer was seaworthy and that the captain had decided not to tamper with the boilers that were out of order, and I saw that she has kept on gaining speed the last few days, and sailing smoothly, I have been actually enjoying every moment of my stay on board. The weather has been ideal and the food -- which for one who observes the dietary laws -- is quite a problem -- has been good. There are only about one hundred and fifty first class passengers on board. Of these a goodly number are young girls from various schools and colleges travelling with their teacher to learn something about Europe. There are no people of prominence or wealth on board. Hence there is more congeniality and quiet than on the big steamers.

There was, of course, an entertainment on July 4. The speeches were of the usual platitudinous type. An Armenian,

Dr. Yovan, who appears to be associated with a missionary school in
? Ectatana delivered himself of a fiery speech in which he cursed the
Turk and blessed America.

An unpleasant incident, at least as far as I am concerned, took place the night before last (Saturday night, July 8, 1922). A mock trial was arranged. One of the jurors pretended to be a Jew. As he came forward wearing a hat and acting ludicrously, one of the leading men in the mock trial ~~xxx~~, Carpenter by name, called out "This is not a synagogue." I had to struggle hard to keep myself from dēnounc= ing Carpenter right there and then. I awaited my chance when the affair was over, and gave Carpenter together with some of the principal or= ganizers of the trial, a piece of my mind. The others among whom were Dr. Yonanand Mr. Prentiss (on a reconstruction mission to the Caucasus) agreed that I was right. The next day both of these men seemed to feel rather apologetic that one of their companions should have betrayed his dislike for Jews.

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Sunday, August 20, 1922

On board S. S. Arabic (White Star Line) about 700 miles west of Boston, where we expect to land on Tuesday, August 22.

Our trip to Europe turned out to be anything but what we originally pictured it would be. Instead of affording us rest and recreation with an opportunity to get in the space of five weeks a glimpse at some of the ancient world cities that lie out of the route of the average person who goes abroad during the summer -- such cities as Naples, Rome, Palermo, Athens and Constantinople, the trip turned out to be a seven week ordeal due to the failure of the S.S. Philadelphia to prove seaworthy. We expected to get to Naples about the 15th of July, expecting the steamer to stay there at the utmost about three days, during which time we might take a peep at Rome. But all our plans were



upset because when the steamer arrived at Naples on the 18th we learned that it would go no further in the Mediterranean, but after docking for about a week during which time her boilers would be repaired, we would make the return trip with her. We were rather pleased with the change of plans, because we realized that a long sea voyage on that kind of a steamer was more of an annoyance than a pleasure, and because we would be able to spend at least a few days in Rome.

We arrived at Rome on Wednesday, July 20 about 7:00 P.M. We took rooms at the Grand Hotel. Finding the charges to be enormous (140 lire for a night - about \$7.00) we changed the next morning for the Quirinal where they charged us only 65 lire. Thursday morning we spent in getting our bearings in the city with the aid of a Baedeker. In the afternoon we took one of Cook's tours. A guide took us around the city and led us through the ancient part of it pointing out the various ruins of the Forum and of the palaces of the Caesars. The next morning we went about exploring the city by ourselves, making it our business to locate the Synagogue and to find out there if we could get a kosher meal anywhere. I found the synagogue architecturally quite impressive on the outside, but was disappointed at the interior decorations and furnishings. The sexton's daughter gave us the address of a kosher restaurant that was run by one J. Pines, 12 via Campe Marzia.

The sight of the ancient Jewish Ghetto, of the little church nearby bearing the inscription *מלך ישראל*, of the bridge of Fabricius with its ancient Hermae set my imagination at work upon the scenes that must have been enacted there in which our people figured. The fact that it was near the month of Ab caused my thoughts to revert to the Jewish captives whom I saw in my mind's eye being led in chains across that bridge and wondering what fate awaited them, slavery or death.



Next morning I attended services at the synagogue. There were about a hundred men in the auditorium. The women sat in the gallery. The services were dull and mechanical. The people were not in the least interested in what was going on.

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Tuesday morning on S.S.Arabic, August 22, 1922

A man who spoke English rather fairly had me sit next to him. He told me he came from Austria about thirty years ago, but that he was thoroughly italianized by this time. From him and from a few others that I interrogated, I learned that there were about 13 to 14 thousand Jews in Rome, some of them very wealthy but that there was no Jewish life to speak of. Very few keep kashruth or give their children a Jewish training. I understood that there was such a thing as a Talmud Torah, but that it was closed at the time on account of vacation. The Rabbi Sacerdote was also away on his vacation to Switzerland. No sermons are delivered at the synagogue except on holidays.

I was very much pleased to see that they had the custom of taking cognizance of a girl's becoming Bas Mizvah. They call it entering "Minyan" at the age of twelve. The ceremony consists of having the father called up to the Torah on the Sabbath that the girl becomes Bas Mizvah. She accompanies him to the almemar, and when he is through with his part, she recites the benediction of *אשר ייחדנו*. Before Musaph the Rabbi addresses her on the significance of her entering minyan. On the Sabbath I was at the synagogue there were three girls and one boy who entered minyan. The assistant rabbi who was supposed to address them, read something to them out of a book in a very mechanical fashion. The fathers of the girls acted as if they were rather infrequent visitors at the synagogue.

The presence of the organ in the synagogue constituted enough of a reform with some of the Jews in Rome to have led a group of them to

establish another synagoge on Via Balba, which I visited in the afternoon of that same Sabbath. There too I was struck with the lifeless and mechanical manner in which the service was gone through. Somehow I was never so struck by the strong resemblance which the Jewish ritual can be made to bear to a Catholic mass, as I was when I saw the Italian version of Judaism.

I visited St. Peters and the Sistine Chapel twice. At the time I was too bewildered by the forest of architecture, sculpture and paintings to form any kind of unitary impression. It was only after a discussion with Mr. Ford, a dramatic producer, whom I became acquainted with here on board, that I realized the enormous incongruity of Roman Catholic religion, and therefore the unlimited degree to which paradox can be carried out in the human spirit. To think that all that wealth of gold and silver and marble, all that splendor and glory^{of art} are intended to accentuate the teaching that only the meek and the humble can enter the kingdom of God! That vulgar flaunting tomb of Alexander VII is apparently the Roman Catholic method of teaching the average man and woman that worldly glory and power are to be shunned as of Satan! And the structure itself, where man is supposed to commune with God, where God's presence is supposed to be felt more vividly than anywhere else in the world! Only the ancients despite their intellectual crudity had the right idea when they built a temple not for man the worshipper but for the god worshipped. The worshippers stood round about on the eminence imagining that to the dark temple that was entered by the high-priest the god had come to communicate his pleasure to his people. On the other hand the gothic church is a sincere human attempt to bring God and man together under one roof without destroying the infinite and spiritual character of God. But in the Roman basilica, such as St. Peters is, I seemed to see the old pagan god's semesne invaded by man, who finding himself in god's house as it were for the first time snoops



around to satisfy his curiosity and wonder at the costly furnishings while waiting for the owner to put in appearance. St. Peters is not a church but an art gallery such as the gods might have established in Olympus. I wonder where Peter the poor ignorant, kind hearted fisherman finds himself more out of place, standing on top of Trojan columns or in the midst of the Olympian art gallery.

On Monday morning, July 24, Lena and I rushed through part of the Vatican, and in the afternoon of that same day we were on our way back to Naples, expecting to leave with the Philadelphia on Tuesday. We stopped that night at Hotel Bertolini from where we got a beautiful night view of the city. The next morning we learned that the Philadelphia would not sail as scheduled, because of complications on account of demands on the part of the Italian government. When on Friday, July 28 we realized that her sailing was being postponed indefinitely we took passage on the Arabic which was scheduled to sail on Tuesday, August 8. The mental torture caused by the delay in getting back to the States and the unlooked for expense of return passage seemed for the moment to undo all the pleasure derived from the trip. Our stay in Naples was taken by us in the spirit of a compulsory confinement. If we had more money we might have gone back to Rome, or to Florence, but with a general strike on at the time we would perhaps have gotten into worse trouble if we had gone any ~~far~~ further traveling. We made a hurried excursion to Sorrento and from there we returned by car and railway to Naples. On another day we visited the ruins of Pompei.

Another ruin that has not even the interest that the other ruins have for the spectator is the little synagogue where I attended services on two Sabbaths and on Tisha B'Ab. When I inquired at Cooks as to the whereabouts of the synagogue, they had not the least idea that there was such a thing in Naples. Finally I came across some one who told us that there was one that could be reached by the Via Capella

Vecchia. When I got there my heart sank within me to see what a state of miserable poverty and insignificance Judaism is getting to. The Via Capella is a staircase alley. That alley leads into a yard, and that yard into a backyard filled with garage ware, with chickens walking about among them. Another turn and another stairs leading to a dark passage at the end of which you enter a little synagogue, built after the Sephardic fashion. The pulpit is attached to the middle of the right wall upon which is hung a Mahzah that functions as an Erur T'humin.

They had to wait for a long time before they got minyan. I made myself understood to the Hazan (Laide (?) by means of Hebrew. I learned from him that there were about a thousand Jews in Naples. Very few of them are children of natives or natives. Only one was a native among the few that were there. One of his sons he told me was in America making his living as an orchestra leader.

* * *

The Arabic sailed on the 9th instead of on the 8th. Everything went along ~~smoothly~~ smoothly and I hoped both to do a little work and to get a rest while on board. But no sooner had we passed Gibraltar than our troubles began. On Sunday morning, August 13, the steering gear got out of order and the ship was stopped for repairs. After our ~~unpleasant~~ unpleasant experiences with an unseaworthy vessel we were very much upset by this incident. But that was not to be the last of mishaps. At Ponta Dalgarda, Azores, we overstayed the time we were supposed to lie there because some repairing had to be done on the engine, we were told. On Friday morning, August 18, the rudder broke down again, we drifted and we crawled along in a zigzaggy course for twelve hours. The same thing happened on Saturday midnight after a heavy gale. She has been sailing since yesterday (Monday, August 21 noon) quite steadily and now we expect to reach Boston this evening.

Throughout the seven and a half weeks' trip, with the exception of the few days at Rome which I enjoyed thoroughly, I was beset by all sorts of fears and anxieties. I suppose a physician would say that I was suffering from neurathemia. During all the time, however, that I was the victim of these states of mind I did quite a bit of introspection. I was also interested to see how far my religion would enable me to overcome fear. It was borne in on me with a great deal of force that the primary function of religion should be to emancipate the human being from the fear of death. A godd deal of the meanness and cruelty of the human being has its source in the fear of death. With that fear conquered the problem of social injustice due to man's greed would not be as difficult to meet as it is now.

I noticed how superstitious against my better reason these fears made me. Every word or incident that could in the remotest way be associated with the things that I apprehended set me on edge. I could not hear a remark bearing on the future without my attaching it some ominous significance whenever it lent itself to such significance. When Lena e.g. made the remark before we boarded the Arabic that we will have to bensch "Gomel" when we got home I took it to denote that we shall have to go through harrowing experiences. If she told me a dream I at once set to interpreting it in the spirit of the Talmud. I almost dreaded looking at the rainbow which appeared in front of the ship and which indicated that we were coming into a rainstorm. What did I not fear might happen'. To begin with I was afraid that when we got into Naples, Vesuvius might become active. When on Saturday, July 29 I read that an American geologist was foretelling the complete collapse of the Mediterranean world and the wiping out of its populations by the end of August I became the more anxious to get away from Naples. Reading the week after that there was a series of earthquakes at Caird ^{was} ~~did~~ not calculated to add to my comfort. When the general strike broke out in Genoa I was worried that the Arabic would be tied up there, et., etc.

Aug 22, 1922

a storm at sea
chap 3
I never recited the prayer *Shema* every time I went to bed with such intensity as I have been doing it the last few weeks. Has it helped me any? I am not sure. I certainly wish it would help me. One night as I lay in bed in my cabin I heard the storm beating against the portholes. I felt the boat being tossed almost helplessly on the waves because her machinery was out of order, and listened to the buzzing of the telephone that connected the captain in the room overhead with the engineer. When the possibility of having to take to the life boats did not seem very remote, I caught myself reasoning in this vein. If there is a God, and life has meaning, and the world a purpose, death can not possibly be the dreadful thing that it appears. If, on the other hand, our belief in God is an illusion and the world is a mere chance concurrence of indescribably meaningless atoms, then the sooner we get rid of life and its troubles the better. In either case there is no sense or reason in being afraid of death. I can see that there is a great deal of truth in what Wills says in his general history about Buddhism, to wit: that it condemns the fear of death as being no less sinful than vice or selfishness.

* * *

Thursday, August 31, 1922

Last night Dr. L. Finkelstein and his wife paid us a visit. He and I got into a hot discussion as to the wisdom of my replacing the Kol Nidre with a selection from a poem by Luzzatto and retaining only the traditional melody. He considered such action on my part as destructive of Judaism, for if I were to carry out the motive that led me to take this step to its logical conclusion I would abrogate such a law as Halizah. I contended that I regarded sincerity in prayer as superior to all other considerations. The substance of the Kol Nidre expressing disavowal of all promises and oaths was entirely unspiritual and unworthy of a place in the service on the most solemn ~~placexixtha~~ day of the

year. The reason it is permitted to occupy so important a place is that the people have no idea of what it is about. The pious emotions that it evokes, if it does that at all, have nothing to do with its contents. Such a state of affairs is deplorable in any religion since it makes for mummery and hypocrisy.

Finekelstein, of course, remained obdurate, but his wife (who originally was a Miss Bentwitch) seemed inclined to agree with me.

This morning Harry L. Simmons, my wife's cousin and chairman of the SAJ Board of Directors, ran in to see me and to pay his respects in view of my return from Europe. He had but a few minutes time and did not seem very anxious to discuss SAJ matters with me. What he did say, however, was enough to make me miserable for the rest of the day. "The poorest article on the market to sell is religion," were his words, implying that people do not want and have no use for the kind of thing to which I was devoting my life.

A little while ago a young couple came to make final arrangements for their wedding ceremony which they want me to perform. The young man, Albert Greenspan, I knew as a young boy when he was a pupil some sixteen years ago at the religious school of the 85 Street congregation where I was minister at the time. He was one of the best behaved and most attentive pupils. I had lost track of him until he came to ask me to officiate at his wedding.

Today he brought his fiancée with him. I gathered that he wanted me to explain to her the nature of the ceremony that I expected to perform for them. She knew nothing of Jewish life or worship although her father was an attendant at the 116 St. Synagogue where Drs. Klein and Drachman are rabbis. She remembers having been only once at the synagogue. At the weddings which she attended, the ceremony was usually performed

by Rabbis who made use of little or no Hebrew. Apprehending that I might use much Hebrew she was afraid the ceremony would be old fashioned and meaningless. Greenspan, therefore, wanted me to explain to her in detail the meaning of the various benedictions and to convince her that they ought not to be omitted.

I took a prayer book, and went over the entire marriage service with them explaining every benediction. The groom asked that I send him the prayer book so that he might study up the service in order to be able to follow it intelligently. I took advantage of the opportunity to induce them to ~~buy~~ buy an English translation of the Bible, Montefiore's Bible for Home Reading and Goodman's History of the Jews.

The bride then began to haggle with me about the length of the ceremony. She wanted it to last not longer than ten minutes. I told her it would probably take fifteen.

Then ensued a battle royal about the reciting of Grace and the Seven Benedictions after the banquet. The groom thought all that would be necessary would be to have the old folks take part in the recitation of Grace. I maintained that it was an insult to Judaism to relegate its customs to the few old people, while the rest of the company went off merrymaking. But both bride and groom maintained that the rest of the company was entirely unused to Jewish ceremonies and would take no part in Grace. I explained that I was willing to recite something in English that would be an expression of gratitude to God for the occasion. It was not more than proper, I said, that when a number of people get together at a wedding banquet that they should express that sense of gratitude which raises the act of eating from a mere animal act. They saw the point but demurred to my repeating the Seven Benedictions in Hebrew. But there were the grandparents to be considered for whose sake alone the banquet was to be served Kosher. So they went away undecided as to how to disentangle the puzzle.

The Eighty-Fifth St. Congregation refused ~~me~~ to elect me Rabbi so long as I did not have Semikha from an orthodox Rabbi of standing. They refused to recognize the Seminary Diploma. It was only when I obtained Semikha from Rabbi Reines whom I met at Frankfort-on the Main in 1908 that they elected me as Rabbi. Up to that time I had acted as "minister."

* * *

Sunday, September 3, 1922

For the first time in my life I attended a Christian Science service in order to have an idea of what it was like. I went to the Second Church Scientist on Central Park West and 68 Street. When I entered the building I was impressed by the simplicity of the structure within in marked contrast to the marble pretentiousness without. By eleven o'clock the church was nearly full, which is remarkable at this time of the year, and especially today when anyone that can afford it goes out for the week end over labor day. Most of the churches and nearly all of the well-to-do synagogues are ^{still} shut down.

I was impressed by the texts which are inscribed upon the wall facing the audience. Above the pulpit is the commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." On the wall left of the organ is a text from the New Testament, wherein Jesus endows his followers with power over scorpions etc. The author of the saying is given as Jesus and not Christ. On the right of the organ is a quotation of Mrs. Eddy's. Just as the service was about to begin a man and women, both middle aged, neat and impressive in appearance emerged from a side door behind the pulpit.

The service opened with the reading of the first part of Psalm 8 to which were added texts from other parts of the Bible. I noted that throughout the service the Two Testaments were treated as a quarry from which choice texts were hewn at random and then put together into a striking mosaic.

After the Bible reading the congregation sang a hymn from the Hymn Book copies of which were to be found in every seat. Glancing through the Hymn Book I was struck by the abundance of verse and music which the Christian Scientists have produced, and which no doubt materially aids their movement. The verse at times limps, is stilted and artificial, but it meets their need of putting the new idea into song.

There was then silent prayer. For about two minutes there was absolute silence in the church. As I look around I saw almost everybody's eyes closed and head lowered.

This was followed by the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, every verse of which was interspersed by an interpretive quotation from Mrs. Eddy, read by the Reader. In place of the sermon, there was a selection of texts from both Testaments grouped about the ten commandments, read by the woman reader. After each group of texts the man reader read the interpretation given in "Science and Health."

Nothing in the service was spontaneous or left to the inspiration of the moment. Every word uttered from the pulpit had been carefully prearranged.

The content of the service consisted of a continuous ~~xxxxx~~ reiteration that God was love and spirit, whereas matter was illusion and unreality. As a mental dope nothing could be more powerful or better administered. But again I marvel at man's marvelous ability at self delusion. To be constantly denying the reality of matter and yet judging from the prosperous looking men and women all dressed with the elegant simplicity which only the extremely rich can afford and observing the immense wealth sunk in the church and overhead charges, they seem to attach a great deal of importance to earth and things earthy.

As far as I can see Christian Science has succeeded in transferring man's natural tendency to idol worship from concrete objects to

hollow abstractions, like love, spirit, etc. The very denial of matter is a deliberate escape from the troublous problems of life with its maladjustments.

If instead of affirming that God is love, spirit, etc there were a new religion to proclaim that Love is God, that spirit, courage, devotion, etc. are all but aspects of the Love that is God, we might have a religion that is in accord with reality as man now knows it to be. Only when the term God will come to have an adjectival force instead of being a substantive will it exercise a wholesome effect upon human life that is to say, when people will use the term God for the purpose of emphasizing the extreme importance or the infinite value of certain things, then will religion be operative.

* * *

Tuesday, September 12, 1922

Last Thursday (Setp. 7) two men from Cleveland, Beck and Friedman, came to persuade me to accept the position left vacant by Rabbi Solomon Goldman. Beck is the vice-president of the Hungarian Congregation and Friedman is a nephew of Barney Friedman, former president of that Congregation and apparently quite an active worker in that community. I met Barney Friedman several times at the Convention of the United Synagogue where he acted the part of religious boss of the Middle West Jewry. He would always insist upon having "his^d rabbi" conform to all the details of Orthodox observance while he himself made it a practice to stay at a Gentile Hotel even during Passover week.

The spirit of the congregation is a peculiar compound of old word nationalism, orthodox religiosity and social climbing. It is only in recent years that they reconciled themselves to the necessity of taking a rabbi of other than Jewish Hungarian extraction. Magyarism still runs high; it is the only bond which holds together the hetero-

geneous elements of that congregation, for they are very heterogeneous in their religious attitude. There are members who still take delight in Talmudic "bon mots," and there are members who are absolute free thinkers. (Goldman was successful because he of all the men in the Jewish ministry is most capable of being everything to everybody. What saves him from being a hypocrite is that he is everything simultaneously instead of successively.)

While there is no religious uniformity among the members, the orthodox, or anti-reform bias is the most aggressive. The founders were men of that bias, and like with everything Hungarian, loyalty to persons and to what those persons stand for is the ruling principle of organization. Abstract principles and watchwords once accepted are adhered to without further analysis or criticism.

The element of social climbing is evident both in the practice of the leading members of that congregation to join Rabbi Silver's or Rabbi Wolsey's Temple and in their strenuous endeavors to bring up their own congregation to the same standard of social prestige as that of the Temple congregations. A rabbi who can hold his own with Silver and Wolsey is indispensable for such a purpose.

Goldman filled the bill. Being elected three years ago at a salary of \$5000, they had raised ^{it} to \$9000 when his wife gave birth to a second baby. They presented him in addition with a \$4500 car. He left them on the pretext that they were not proceeding with the building of a new Temple and Center and accepted the Jewish Center of Cleveland, which had been built up largely through the efforts of Rabbi Benjamin. In reality, he hoped that about half the congregation would follow him. So far only two members resigned. In resigning, Goldman acted upon the advice of both Silver and Wolsey who really should have dissuaded him from heading a congregation so extremely orthodox as the one of the Cleveland Jewish Center, but it appears that they too did not give him

disinterested advice, since they expected that with the break up of the Hungarian congregation their own would be swelled in numbers. Personally I am very much chagrined and humiliated at Goldman's conduct in the entire matter because it seems that he acted unethically toward Benjamin whose influence with the Jewish Center people he appears to have done much to undermine. It looks as though he played the part of the *שׂוֹמֵר פֶּתַח הַדַּל* I never expected it from Goldman who professed to be an ardent disciple of mine. He certainly also should have known better than to accept a position with a congregation that is unalterably ~~ap~~posed to all liberalism in thought and practice, especially after he had seen me give up the Jewish Center here, because of its Orthodoxy. The entire transaction is just as shady as any practiced by the shrewd and greedy businessman.

I learned that Goldman urged his present congregation to adopt the family pew system, but failed in his attempt.

For me to become the rabbi at the Hungarian Congregation of Cleveland is out of question. I tried to make that clear to the committee that came to see me. They thought that perhaps I might consent to occupy their pulpit at least during the High Holidays. All my representations were in vain. Fortunately they say ^{to} Cyrus Adler the next day, and he got them to be contented with asking Rabbi Neulander to preach during the Holidays. Should he prove successful, they might appoint him permanently.

I have been very much insensed by a letter which I received from Cyrus Adler enclosing a copy of a memorandum from Louis Marshall. The coldness and inconsiderateness of these men, to say nothing of their complete lack of imagination and sympathy when it comes to understanding Jewish life and thought would long ago have made me resign my positions at the Seminary, if I did not have a family to support. God knows I do

not expect bouquets and paeans of thanksgiving for all the labor that I put into the Institute and the Seminary, but ^I certainly do not deserve to be treated as though I were a clerk soldiering on his job, or wasteful of the institution's money.

The dust that Marshall beat up this time was about the printing of the register of the Teachers Institute. Instead of using his position as president to get money for the Seminary he uses it merely to curtail expenditures. Some time ago he advanced a loan of \$19,000 to the Seminary, and one never hears the end of it. How little he understands the value of the ^{T.I.} ~~T.I.~~ register is evident from his criticisms that it might have been consolidated with the Seminary Register, thus saving the cost of stamps and envelopes. He can not even imagine that those for whom the T. I. Register is intended, young boys and girls, have no interest in the rabbinic courses.

Adler, in his letter to me did not deign even to allude to my having returned from the European trip. Not that it is important in the least, but after all we are human beings and not impersonal automats. One cannot help feeling indignant at the thought that these flunkeys who exercise so much unseen power over the fate of men and ideas and whose urbanity is always on tap when they need you, keep you at arm's length to remind you that you are after all at their mercy; they can make or break you.

Like all great flunkeys, he has lesser flunkeys to revolve around him. One of his satellites who expects to shine as his successor when his light will go out is -- from what I can gather -- Rev. Dr. A. Neuman. I understand that Neuman named his first born Cyrus Adler in admiration of his patron. The date set for the dimming of the star, and the starring of the satellite - literally speaking, for Adler to retire from the presidency of Dropsie and transferring it to Neuman is three years from now. So precisely is it possible to measure the courses of

the human satellites in the heavens of flunkeyism!

(I sincerely regret having written the above about Adler, and in my thoughts I pray forgiveness for having ascribed to him motives of which I have not sufficient evidence -- Erev Rosh Hashonah)

* * *

Friday, September 15, 1922

Rabbi Samuel M. Cohen is the Executive Director of the United Synagogue. The only quality which he possesses for so important a post is his faith in the United Synagogue, a faith that to my mind accounts for his sticking to so precarious a job as his is.

I seldom can get myself to take him seriously. I was well impressed, however, by a report which he has drawn up on his trip out West. Here is a significant passage:

The farther West one goes, the stronger the impression grows that Judaism is undergoing a process of dissolution. There are few ^{homes} ~~houses~~ that are kosher...In a number of instances, especially among the so-called conservative congregations, the Rabbi's loyalty to the dietary laws is deprecated. It prevents more intimate contact with the members. The Sabbath and Festivals are gradually being secularized (sic)...Even the practice of lighting the candles on Friday night and the reciting of the Kiddush are gradually being abandoned. Synagogue attendance on the Sabbath is, with but few exceptions, generally decreasing.

What is more portentous is the alarming increase of intermarriage. Children of strictly Orthodox families are marrying Gentiles and this condition is becoming so wide-spread that it is not regarded as shocking any more."

* * * *

Friday, September 22, 1922

ב"ד נח ט"ז

On Monday, Sept. 11 I addressed a group consisting of about fifteen young men and one woman who intend to go into Jewish Welfare Work. The group had been given a course of lectures by Rabbi Max Kadushin on "The Jewish Social Heritage." He made use largely of the two or three chapters I succeeded in working out during the month of June. Having told them that he was giving them the philosophy of Judaism that I had worked out, they were anxious to have me answer in person some of the questions that the course had awakened in their minds. Judging from the interest displayed and the questions asked the course that Kadushin gave them seems to have proved very successful. Here are some of the questions.

What ~~for~~ justification is there from the pragmatic point of view for the continued existence of Judaism, i.e., how can the distinctly Jewish principles rather than the secular principles of social justice etc. be of greater service in contributing toward the upbuilding of a better society and a more spiritualized individual existence?

Answer: The moral and spiritual aspects of life cannot be built up in vacuo. The principles of right and wrong, belief in God, etc. cannot be transmitted without reference to some historic background. That historic background is moreover essential to give momentum to the tendencies within us that make for living on a higher plane of existence than that of the sub-human being. The choice in actual life is not between furnishing the historic background and momentum, on the one hand, and other hand relying on abstract principles, but between one historic background or another, between Judaism and Christianity, between Christianity and Americanism, etc. In giving first place to Judaism we are at the same time furnishing background to what is of permanent worth in Americanism.

Question: A more or less distinctive racial minority submerged in a dominant majority - a minority that cannot or will not merge - will always be open to distrust and suspicion. Will not, therefore, the growing race consciousness of the American Jew, expressed in the increasing number of distinctive Jewish centers, Y's etc. foster and sustain anti-Semitism?

Answer: I conceive Judaism as a socializing and humanizing influence in a person's life. If these institutions would live up to that purpose in Judaism they would go a great way toward counteracting anti-Semitism. The absence of such institutions would create the development of a type of Jew who would not only cause anti-Semitism but justify it.

Question: Other world races do not object to merging their tradition and social heritage in the common stream of American life. Why then should the Jews hold aloof?

Answer: Because the Jewish social heritage is not merely coordinate with American Culture as are the traditions and social heritages of other people. It is the spiritual background to all of the western civilizations.

Questions Is the Jewish social heritage chiefly literary, centering around a theological theme, or is it social and bound up in the mores of Jewish community life?

Answer: The Greek or the Latin Heritage is literary in character because there is no group in which that heritage is transmitted as a social requirement to which the individual is expected on moral ground to live up. A child that is born to Jewish parents is not asked whether he wants to be a Jew or not but he is brought up as one first and then cannot break away from Judaism without incurring the charge of disloyalty. This fact renders the Jewish heritage social.

There were other questions of the same high order. The discussion made it necessary for me to attempt to give my conception of God. Cosmically, I said, "God" means that the aspect of quality is just as inherent in and basic to reality as quantity. Humanly, "God" means that all that we understand by human differentia is of supreme importance. This is clearly conveyed if we transpose the term "God" from the subject to the attribute. Thus, instead of saying God is justice, courage, etc., we were to say Justice, Courage, etc. are God.

The formal opening of the Teachers Institute courses took place on Wednesday night Sept. 19. It was attended for the most part by the members of the Freshman class. The exercises did not come off to my liking. I always feel uncomfortable whenever I make use of English instead of Hebrew in the presence of the T. I. faculty, especially as the Institute is making every effort to foster a Hebraic spirit and atmosphere not only in the classroom but also in the extra-curricular student activities. I probably could deliver the address in Hebrew if I were to make the effort, but I have not the self-confidence and am too self-conscious about any hesitancy in the search of a word. I feel that sooner or later I shall have to conquer this diffidence.

After the exercises I walked home with Rabbi Levine. The conversation turned upon the proposed elimination of the Kol Nidre from the Yom Kippur Eve service. He argued very much along the lines of Dr. Finkelstein (see p. 94) in fact it was a result of his conversation he had with Finkelstein that he deprecated my tampering with the Kol Nidre prayer, though he apparently hesitated very much before he spoke to me about it. Strongly as I disagreed with him, his honesty of purpose in urging me to let that prayer alone, and the admiration I have for his fine character have led me to change my

mind as to the advisability of making an issue of so insignificant a question. I, therefore, told the Board of Trustees of the SAJ at the meeting which took place on Monday, Sept. 18 that for the present I shall allow the Kol Nidre to be sung.

The Board of Trustees meeting on Sept. 18 was very gratifying to me. They acted favorably on my suggestion that the SAJ take charge of the educational work of the League of Jewish Youth. They voted \$2500 toward that work. There are tremendous possibilities for good in such cooperation.

Last night I attended a dinner given to Israel Unterberg on the occasion of his return to Europe. Being asked to speak on the Jewish educational problem in its relation to Mr. Unterberg, I brought out the following points:

Unterberg is the type of Jew needed to assure us of a Jewish future -- an all around Jew -- who does not specialize in philanthropy, synagogues, etc., but takes an interest in all of these aspects of Jewish life -- and one with a sense of relative values, who therefore places Jewish education in the foreground of his interests.

We are very much agitated by the growth of anti-Semitism in this country. The experience of the past should teach us that we cannot avoid anti-Semitism. Our problem should be how to meet it. The only way we can meet it without being overwhelmed by it is to be armed with a sense of self-respect in the highest sense of that term. Jewish self-respect is possible only to those who have learned to understand and apply the teachings in Judaism.

Coming down to the question as to how we may accomplish this purpose, I urged cooperation with the element of German Jews who have shown more efficient constructive ability though they lack the Jewish

spirit. They have brought into existence and are at present in control of the Jewish institutions of higher learning that supply Jewish teachers and guides to American Jewry, they are in control of the Federation and of the Welfare Board which is shaping the communal life of the Jews outside of New York. On the other hand, we Jews of Eastern European origin possess the spirit and the enthusiasm but we lack constructive ability. Why not combine the two elements and achieve something worth while.

Unterberg being a persona grata with both elements ought to serve as a liason officer.

I concluded with the sentiment that the presence of the guests was an assurance of his having a year of happiness and blessing

הנהיגנו שנה טובה ומוצלחת

Semel was the last to speak. As usual he won the hearts of his hearers with his many funny stories in the telling of which he is really a master. He laced it into me for having suggested cooperation with the German Jews, and said that if I had not broken up the organization (the Jewish Educational Association) with my insisting upon my point of view and my interpretation of Judaism, the organization would have done constructive work.

I do not, of course, consider it worthwhile to refute his charges. He may believe what he says about me, but I am certain that the inability of our people to work harmoniously lies too deep to be accounted for by the fact that I insist upon my pet theories in Judaism.

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Monday night, October 2, 1922 *היום ראשון 2/10/22*

The high holidays are over. They were a source of anxiety to me in view of the fact that the SAJ was to hold services for the first time in a hall where the atmosphere is not calculated to inspire any sense of reverence or worship. Personally there was much of a comedown

from the magnificent though small synagogue of the Center to the entertainment and wedding hall with the improvised ark on the stage and camp chairs on the floor. Yet when I recalled how narrowly I escaped the clutches of an ingrowing bourgeoisie hypocritical religiosity that is devoid of the least idealistic aspiration I thanked God that he delivered me from the Center. I know that I make this damning statement about a Jewish congregation on the night after Yom Kippur. But I do not say this in anger and indignation. I am convinced that they are unfortunate spiritually in having come from homes where religion and morality were treated as two radically different domains.

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Religion was a matter of fearing God and morality a matter of fearing man. What God wants, according to their idea of Him, is simply to get enough praises and prayers said to Him, and certain ceremonies, which He had commanded, scrupulously observed. What man wants is regard for the rights of others, and a whole string of ethical duties that interfere with a man's success in business. Since it is only man that exacts ethical duties, one doesn't run great risks in disregarding those duties, especially when they have not assumed the form of legal enactments for the violation of which one might be brought to court. This is the kind of world outlook which they have drilled into them by the example of their fathers and mothers, and by the sanction implied rather than expressed of the spiritual leaders in the small towns of Eastern Europe. Men like Joseph H. Cohen, Julius Schwartz, Ike Phillips, the Sadowskys, Mark Horowitz, Fischman, are all the products of such world outlook. They are the type whose sons, when sent to the out of town colleges and universities as a rule create a bad impression by their vulgarity and unethical conduct. Much of the anti-Semitism in these institutions of higher learning is due to the Jewish young men who come from wealthy homes like those of the men named above.

The rejoicing I experience whenever I think of my emancipation from the Center is, I hope, not of the Pharisaic kind that finds expression in such benedictions as those over the facts that God "did not make me a Goy," or a woman or a slave. I realize that in having failed to alter their world outlook I admit defeat. My only consolation is that if J. H. Cohen had not been in the way I probably would have been able to do something with them. When I took charge of the Center Cohen had too strong a hold on them for anyone to loosen that hold. He cultivated them and exploited them for the Beth Israel Hospital. He never lost an opportunity to flatter them into believing themselves high minded and generous hearted, whereas from me they heard statements made repeatedly from the pulpit of a kind that tended to destroy the illusion about themselves that Cohen so cleverly fostered in them.

To come back to the SAJ services which started all these comments on my former connection with the Center, they proved very successful as services, though not as sources of income, with scarcely one thousand dollars profit on seats in place of the five, and some say ten thousand dollars on which the SAJ organizers counted. I preached both days of Rosh Hashana, Shabbas Shuvah, and twice on Yom Kippur. After a great deal of pleading, and as a result of the wives sitting with their husbands and children I succeeded in doing away with the continual conversation and disinterestedness in the service that have always marred the services over which I had the good or ill fortune to preside. Of course there were one or two vulgarians that at moments destroyed my serenity -- Polsteins sons not letting up their conversation during Rosh Hashanah services; Julius Blauner's sons -- all young men twenty or thereabouts, talking and laughing while I was explaining the significance of the confessional; Sam C. Lamport telling me on Rosh Hashanah that I owed him *שני אלף* because he came in from Long Branch to hear my sermon, telling me that on the second day of R. H. he could

not come to synagogue because he had invited a number of his friends to his house; and on Yom Kippur eve straying in an hour and a half after the service commenced, falling asleep in his seat after the heavy meal which he probably ate far into the night -- all such incidents still annoy me because I look upon them as symptomatic of the crass vulgarity and amorelism for which I hold responsible the kind of Judaism that Lithuanian Pilpulism or Pharisaism encouraged. Lamport's father comes from a rabbinic home and was brought up on all kinds of religious sophistries. Ike Phillips father was a "Yeshiba bahur" and a Shoet. "From the serpent's root shall come forth a *cocker*" applies equally to both families.

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Tuesday, October 3, 1922

I have been disillusioned today about the success of the Yom Kippur service. My loss of temper on Kol Nidre night when I scolded the congregation for the cold and lackadaisical spirit in which the Maariv service was proceeding - the people even forgetting to answer Amen at the end of benedictions -- and for the leisureliness with which the congregation was collecting -- seems to have displeased a good many, especially my brothers-in-law. One of them - whose Hebrew name is Moishe Hayim, which is shortened into Moe, but which has been translated into Martin for the sake of the Goyim and for the sake of his wife - whose nature seems to have been soured a good deal, complained to my mother-in-law about my shouting on Yom Kippur eve. He has never talked to me about anything or anybody. In all the years that I have known him we have probably not exchanged more than five sentences, although we have never had a falling out about anything, and although hardly a week has passed except during the summer without our seeing each other. My mother-in-law is not a well woman and ought to be spared all knowledge of untoward happenings. But Moe never misses an

opportunity to pour out his tale of woes to her. The tale of woe this time was that I was driving away customers with my ~~rough~~ rough treatment.

As a rule my mother-in-law who has a good deal of common sense never discusses with me matters pertaining to my work. She knows that I am very touchy on that point and am ready to explode at the least provocation. My own mother knows the same too about me and most of the time observes the same rule of avoiding inflammable conversation, but she often forgets the rule and there is a scene. Both of them use my wife as the target of their complaints about me. This time it seems my wife advised my mother-in-law to bring the complaint to me directly. (Later on I learned I was mistaken in this surmise of mine.) I acted like a model son-in-law, listened to all that she had to say -- and she had a good deal to say about her wisdom and foresight in getting all her nine children - God bless them - to be good Jews and marrying them all off successfully. Therefore, I ought to give heed to her advise and not permit men and women to sit together at the SAJ House during services, and to control my temper in the pulpit. I was non-committal on the former, and on the latter I promised her that next Yom Kippur I would demonstrate to her how even tempered I can be.

I had to make up, of course, for my good behavior during the interview with her, by indulging in an extra fit of the blues over the fact that my hands are tied by a number of women of both sexes. The natural desire to return their good will prevents me from taking the only logical step that I ought to take -- accepting Wise's invitation to join the faculty of his Institute of Religion.

Every time I realize how much precious time I am wasting in working out sermons I deplore my impulsiveness which drove me into organizing the SAJ. This realization was brought home to me today as I was laboring with Kadushin for over five hours to find a subject for

Succoth. I have about one hundred and fifty sermons which cover every phase of Judaism. After all, the range of the popular mind is very limited and I have had enough trouble working out themes that most preachers would consider ill adapted for the pulpit. But I am beginning to find it difficult to discuss any theme without in some way reiterating what I have already said. In other words, I have gotten, as far as my own mental growth is concerned, all I could get out of the last four years in the pulpit. From now on most of my preaching is likely to be mere repetition with the furbishing up of an idea here and there, which I expect will consume a good deal of time and mental energy. But what else can I do? I have not the genius of a Magnes who knows how to commit people to undertakings which he initiates and which cost them a great deal of time, effort and money, and who then washes his hands off those undertakings. I lack his personal charm and am not forgiven for the least sin of omission or commission. Not even my own relatives forgive me. Like a fool I have got to stick where I am.

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Wednesday, October 4, 1922

I am reversing the gears and once more singing the praises of the Yom Kippur services. This change of estimate on my part is due to what Kadushin told me today of the effect both the services and the sermons had on Miss Evelyn Garfiel. For a sophisticated person like her to have been inspired by these services is to me very encouraging. Miss Garfiel is a highly intelligent young woman, about twenty-three and of excellent scholastic attainments. She has just completed her doctor's thesis and is preparing herself to do personnel work under the auspices of the SAJ with the League of Jewish Youth. Her father is a business man. In his younger days he was a Yeshiba Bahur. He has kept up his Talmudic studies ever since, and from what I heard from my father (אבא), I judge that he must be quite a "lamdan" for a layman.

As to his religious beliefs, I gathered from his daughter that he has no positive convictions whatever. His Jewishness is a synthesis of Jewish nationalism and sentimental attachment to the ritual practices. Miss Garfiel herself would probably have discarded Judaism altogether if it were not for her Zionist proclivities. A younger brother of hers about eighteen and very bright - has no use for Judaism whatever. He happened to come with her to our services on Yom Kippur night. His reaction to what I said is evident from his remark that for one who cared about religion mine was the only sensible approach. But not every one can be expected to cultivate in religion just as you can not have every one cultivate art or science.

On Monday night I chanced upon David Bressler. He was a student of the Seminary together with me for about a year or two. He then went into social work, as head worker of an immigration bureau. In recent years he went into insurance business with social and philanthropic work as an avocation. He conducted the recent drive for relief of European Jewish war sufferers. I have not been thrown into his company more than three or four times and only in a casual way. Last June I heard that his name was sent in by S. C. Lamport as a member of the SAJ. I understood, of course, that S. C. must have backslapped him into consenting to join the organization as a compliment to me. I was confirmed in my opinion when last Monday Bressler said to me, "I received the application blank of your society and other literature containing a statement of principles to which I must subscribe if I want to become a member. On reading those principles I refused to sign the application. You state that the Society is dedicated to the rebuilding of Palestine. ~~Im~~ I infer that that is a part of religion with you. This I cannot accept. As a haven for those fleeing from persecution, yes, but as Homeland, no." I told him that he was correct in his interpretation of our platform, by which I implied that we could not accept him as a member.

But what are principles, beliefs, ideas to a practical man of the world like S. C.? Neither Kaplan nor Bressler mean anything to him except as possible satellites revolving about himself as a central sun. He wants, therefore, to put us both into one "system" of which he might be the center.

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Thursday, October 5, 1922

Yesterday I had a visit from Dr. B. M. Lewin who arrived in this country about three weeks ago from Haifa. When he asked me whether I had heard of him I tried to cover up my ignorance of him or his work by alluding to the Hashilah where I thought I came across his name, but it did not work. A young man, Harlab, who came together with him and whom Dr. Lewin introduced to me as the son of Rabbi Harlab of Jerusalem helped me out of the scrape by telling me that Dr. Lewin was the author of the most recent scientific edition of the letter of Sherira Gaon. I recalled having come across somewhere the mention of such an edition - or at least I thought I did - and I at once nodded recognition. To my profound regret my sermon work prevents me from keeping in touch with scientific Jewish studies, and I feel awfully embarrassed every time I meet Jewish scholars. This brings to mind the conviction that I hold with regard to the effect of sermonizing upon the rabbi and the development of Jewish thought in this country, the conviction that it develops Am-Haarazuth to the highest degree, and robs Judaism of literary content and culture.

As soon as Harlab told me about Dr. Lewin being the author of the work on Sherira, the latter produced that work together with a number of pamphlets on Geonica. I admitted that although I was interested in Geonica my work and my studies lay in the field of interpretation of Jewish values. To my surprise Dr. Lewin, instead of perfunctorily recognizing the value of the kind of work I was doing,

and then continuing the discussion of his own specialty, displayed a warm hearted interest in my efforts. He confessed that originally he himself was possessed of a burning zeal for an understanding of the fundamentals of Judaism in the light of modern thought, and that in fact it was for the purpose of receiving enlightenment on the basic problems of religion and philosophy that he had originally repaired to the Seminary at Berlin. But to his disappointment he encountered dry pedagogues, whose main interest was philological and historical, and having himself a knack for studies of that kind he was soon diverted from his original purpose. Nevertheless, his intellectual hunger breaks out from time to time. He spoke as though in meeting me he met a kindred spirit.

He looks to be a man of about forty, dark complexioned, medium sized, of stoutish appearance, with full face which radiates honesty. A small goatee beard covers a pointed chin. He wears glasses. He wore a small cap during his conversation with me. He first put on the cap when he had occasion to quote from the writings of the Geonim. I noticed, however, that he shaved his cheeks down to the chin. At the end of our conversation he prayed Minha. Immediately after he was through with the Amidah he turned to me and said, "How many of the prayers that we recite do we really understand?" I told him of my attempt to reinterpret the benedictions in the Amidah in terms of the modern man's conception of God.

Harlab looks like a man in the early twenties, rather seedy looking with his face covered with a blond downy beard which he apparently dare not shave on account of religious scruples. Though he said little, yet from the few remarks that he made, and the tone of assent he expressed whenever the need of reinterpretation was mentioned made evident to me a suppressed soul that yearned for the air and freedom of untrammelled intellectual truth.

Today Rabbi Bernard Heller of Scranton called. Several years ago he was a student at the Seminary. But being troubled by religious doubts he thought he would be more at home at the Cincinnati Hebrew Union College. He accordingly went over to that institution and was graduated as rabbi two years ago last June.

During his stay at the Seminary he was very much impressed by the pragmatic interpretation of Jewish values that I was then presenting to the men with all the zeal of a new discovery. He caught the spirit of my presentation, and carried it with him to Cincinnati where, probably in reaction to the dejudaizing influences of the institution he became more confirmed in the observance of certain ceremonials which he might have repudiated altogether if he had continued his studies at the Seminary in this city. At the end of his course there he handed in a thesis on Judaism and Pragmatism. Therein he set forth views which were the direct antithesis of Kohler's theology. For that he was almost debarred from graduation. I recall when he came to see me at that time and told me of his predicament. The strange thing, they said to me, was that when the letter from Kohler reached him telling him that his thesis was unacceptable on account of its heretical views, it found him standing in his tallith and tephilin and reciting his morning prayers. I advised him to tone down the so called heresies and to try to conciliate the old man (Kohler). I did not want to feel even in the most indirect way accountable for a man's career being ruined. He acted on my advice, and from announcements about some pamphlets by Heller that I happened to come across, I saw that Kohler spoke in glowing terms of Heller's essay attempt to "pragmatise" Judaism.

Some time ago Heller published a number of pamphlets which together with a few others which he is about to write, he wants to issue in book form preceded by an introduction written by me. Acknowledging himself a disciple of mine, he thinks I owe him that kindness. I put him off by promising that I would write such an introduction for him,

after I shall have published some of my own writings. I expressed the hope of being able to carry out his wish within a year or thereabouts. It was the only way I could get rid of him.

I must say that he is a very hard working young man, extremely sincere, and with a certain dash of ability in hitting off an apt expression here and there, but not sufficiently sustained in power of thought or expression. He reads abundantly but his intellectual digestion is weak.

Last night I went to see Louis Marshall. He had kept on refusing to sign a voucher for a Teachers Institute register which was published last April, and in addition he transmitted to me notes written on strips of waste paper implying that I was extravagant with the funds. He discovered suddenly that the TI could get along with half the secretarial service. Hence a note calling for an explanation on that score. I was very much upset when I received a letter from Abrahams, the secretary of the Seminary telling me of Marshall's interpellations. This occasioned my visit to him. As after a similar provocation last year, I realized that his bark is worse than his bite, when I got at talking with him. He disarmed me with his geniality and I left him a much happier man than I had been the entire day before I went to see him.

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Sunday, October 8, 1922

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the SAJ which took place this afternoon Winer suggested that the most practical method of increasing the number of members was to take steps to secure a site for a building and to prepare building plans. There was room for a synagogue on the West Side above 96 Street.

Simmons objected to such procedure at the present stage of the SAJ. He said that instead of the Society representing a movement it

would become localized into a congregation like every other.

I agreed with Simmons. I felt that the Board were losing sight of the main purpose of the organization, primarily because I have never really made a serious effort to have them grasp that purpose in all its implications. Most of them still fail to see the difference between my conception of Judaism and the Orthodox point of view. Somehow they miss the significance of my belief that Judaism should be regarded as having arrived at its present form as a result of natural development, and is not a system of beliefs and practices based on a supermundane Torah. I urged, therefore, that I meet with the Board once a week for the next few weeks for the purpose of explaining to them how the SAJ should be represented to those whom they wish to win as adherents. The first meeting is scheduled to take place at the SAJ House next Thursday at 8:15.

The question of having the family pew system prevail at the services came up again. Everyone was in favor of it. I made it clear that if it were at all practicable to have it I certainly would insist on it. I suppose that it will not be long before we shall have that system of seating at our services.

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Friday, October 13, 1922

Among the persons that came to see me this week were the following:

Miss Garfiel: She gave me a glowing account of her experience for the first time with a group of about 25 young girls at the Downtown Jewish Center in Stanton Street. Although at first opposed to instruction on Jewish matters they were won over into an interest in those matters as soon as she made clear to them that it was possible to view them from a different standpoint from that which they had been trained to see them.

On asking Miss Garfiel what in my sermons on the first day of Succoth - "What Does God Mean to Us" displeased her as I had heard from Kadushin, she said that I did not make clear whether I conceived God as a being or as an idea, i.e., a generalization of the ideals to which we aspire. I explained to her that to me God was not a being, but Reality viewed as an ordered universe. I believe with Spinoza in a Deus sive Natura. God was as much more than an idea as the ego is more than an idea representing the sum of psychic forces in the individual. In fact, Deus and Ego are related to each other as the body and apex of a pyramid. In prayer the Ego becomes conscious of God. Through this awareness it sets into operation psychic forces that are otherwise dormant. Hence the value of prayer.

Rabbi Landesman: One of the recent graduates of the Seminary, now superintendent of the Brownsville Educational Alliance and author of a book on Jewish education. He is small and thin, awkward in his bearing and has a voice so raucous that it grates on the ear.

He told me of the good work that his institution was doing. He mentioned especially the Forum which had been organized by a certain Mr. Seidman but which is now to be taken over by the BEA. My personal vanity was very much hurt when he told me that not only was I not known to the Brownsville Jews but that Mr. Seidman who remembered having heard the paper I read in Chicago did not have a very exalted opinion of me. On the other hand John Haynes Homes is idolized by the Jewish intelligentsia there and Landesman displayed great glee in having secured him as the first speaker for the Forum this year. I had the blues the rest of the day after my conversation with Landesman.

Mr. Reichel: I met this man when I was in Buffalo on behalf of the Society of Jewish Renaissance (now dead). He is a man of about thirty-five who came to this country after quite a stormy career as a Jewish revolutionist in Russia of the humbler type. In Buffalo he made his

living as a teacher in a Hebrew School. After having heard my addresses on the aims of the Society he engaged me in a long conversation on fundamentals of Judaism. Both of us felt that we had very much in common.

I had not heard of him until yesterday when he came to see me and informed that he was a principal of the Tremont Hebrew School. Not long ago he completed the course at college (Buffalo) where he got the A. B. Degree. He took particular pains to explain that he did not care for degrees, but he realized that we lived in a world where people were judged by the degrees tagged on to them. He seems to have a hankering for the rabbinate, especially the preaching phase of it, and at the suggestion of Rabbi Cohen of Texas, of whom he (others as well) thinks very highly he has joined Wise's Institute for Religion. Of the faculty of that Institution Ellbogen and Perles made a good impression on him. Blau seems to have offended him. Considering himself as much of a modern Hebraist as Blau Reichel refused to take Blau's course in Hebrew. When Reichel took exception to a certain interpretation that Blau gave to a rabbinic passage, the latter became insulting.

Reichel wanted to know whether he should meekly submit to all the courses at the Institute, or only take some courses and spend his time in improving his English diction and pronunciation. At present both are pronouncedly foreign. I approved of this plan. On the other hand Dr. Bloch, a member of the staff and a personal friend of his, advised him to stick to the program of the Institute, claiming that it was the Russian in Reichel that made him impatient with systematic presentation of subject matter, and conformity to discipline.

Last night I met the Board of Trustees as agreed at our meeting last Sunday. Present were H.L. Simmons, Joe Levy, J.H. Rubin, Abe Liebovitz, Winer and Lubetkin. I received a letter from Turrel who was in Buffalo saying that he was very much interested in the outcome of these conferences.

I began by explaining that there were three types of influences that were disintegrating Judaism. Materialism, Christianity, Ethical Culture. There is no specific way in which we can counteract materialism. In Christianity Christian Science is taking many from our ranks. Hence a movement that could effectively counteract Christian Science by providing within Judaism the means to health could be very much worth while. Yet far more important is it to ethicise Jewish life to shift the Center of gravity within Judaism itself from ceremonials to ethics. This would hold within the ranks of Judaism many who are idealistically inclined, and who at present turn to the Ethical Culture movement where they can find better opportunity for self-expression than in Judaism.

I would therefore propose that our Society should be a Jewish Ethical Culture Society. Our general aim should be to promulgate the truth that the foremost religious duty of a human being is to engage in lifelong moral self education. Such an aim is, in reality, a modernization of the Jewish ideal of Torah.

Simmons wanted me to state more specifically wherein our Society would differ in its aims from the Ethical Culture Society. This necessitated my mentioning at once that in addition to being committed to the general aim mentioned our Society would stand for certain specific duties, among which was that of developing the spiritual potencies of the Jewish people especially through the upbuilding of Palestine as a Jewish Homeland.

When I saw that he felt that there was not enough in this specific duty to present the wavering Jew from going over to the Ethical Culture Society, I added that in my opinion the Ethical Culture Society was committing a highly unethical act in weaning the Jew away from loyalty to his people. Loyalty is the essence of virtue. Both morality and religion meet in Loyalty. To ^{turn} ~~take~~ a cold shoulder upon one's people as Felix Adler has done is to commit a most unethical act.

This naturally gave rise to a discussion of divided allegiance and hyphenated loyalties. I used the very confusion in people's minds on so burning a question to point out how necessary it is for us continually to re-educate ourselves in our social and moral concepts. At the same time I stated that in my opinion we were making a fetish of American nationalism. I am opposed to all nationalism whether it be American, Jewish or English, if one has to propose loyalty to one nation to the exclusion of all other nations. A national group has first claim upon the loyalty of the individuals that belong to it, but not exclusive claims. And the question of first claim is a serious one only in time of conflict. I cannot conceive of a conflict between United States and Palestine.

Levy insisted, however, upon a categorical reply to the hypothetical question. "Suppose there be a war between U.S. and Palestine, which side would you fight on?"

I replied that to allow unlikely future contingencies to determine the present is as bad as allowing the dead hand of the past to dominate it.

"Would you then break with the past?" I was asked.

"One can be free from the domination of the past without breaking with it."

Coming back to the question of loyalty, I had occasion to point out that although the Irish in America were making much trouble for America with their anti-British activities, and to some extent also with their Catholic allegiance, nevertheless they were forgiven their trespassing of American interest because in their ~~sympathy~~ sympathy with their native country they were displaying a natural human attachment which was deeper and more basic than loyalty to this country of their adoption. It will surely never be necessary for Jews to be placed in such a predicament on account of their attachment to Palestine.

Mr. Winer delivered himself of a lengthy discourse on another of the specific purposes which I had incidentally mentioned as necessary for our Society to adopt, namely the furthering the ideal of the sanctity of human life by refusing on principle to sanction the shedding of human blood. We should take, I said, the same stand as the Quakers on the question of capital punishment and war. He thought that there was enough of fight in most of us members of the Society to rebel at such an aim. Besides, it will involve us in difficulties in case a war should break out.

I felt that this was not the time to discuss the specific pacifist plank in my platform. I asked them to confine their attention to the general aim that I proposed for the Society, and pointed out to them that the adoption of it would necessitate a changing of policy in the matter of our services. Hitherto we have featured our services entirely out of proportion to their significance, assuming that we aim to stress the ethical note in Judaism. I suggested that the delivery of sermons should be discontinued. Preaching has been the bane of my life, not because I believe myself unequal to the task, but because I believe that time and the effort spent upon the preparation of the sermon could be put to infinitely greater use. What we need is more teaching and writing and less preaching.

I happened to have come across an article entitled the Menace of Sermon in the Yale Review of this month. I mentioned that article to those present.

My arguments seem to have made an impression with those into whose ears I had been dinning them some time before. The others went away with a doubt in their minds as to the possibility of building up one Society without a service of which the sermon was the chief attraction.

Tuesday, October 17, 1922

A meeting of the Seminary faculty took place yesterday at which the question of examining Dr. Finkelstein for the Hatorath Horaah came up. He is the first graduate of the Seminary to receive that degree. The giving of that degree is a concession to Orthodox legalism. It calls for the study of a good deal of Talmud and Poskim. Ordinarily Hyamson who is professor of codes should have been the one to conduct the work of preparing for that degree but he has not the necessary knowledge. Ginzberg took charge of it. He mapped out the course and periodically examined Finkelstein in the ground covered. Now that Finkelstein is ready for examination there is no one except Ginzberg who is qualified to examine him. No other member of the faculty is considered expert in the legalistic literature. I suggested that outside Rabbanim be invited, men like Rabbis Klein, Margolies, etc., so as to convince them that the Seminary can prepare men who are ready to meet the traditional requirements for Hatorath Horaah. To this those present demurred, and rightly so, on the ground that the leading Orthodox rabbis are unreliable and untrustworthy. They are likely to give out a false report of the nature of the examination and of Finkelstein's knowledge of the subject matter. What a commentary upon Orthodox Judaism that not a single Orthodox Rabbi could be found in this entire city who could be invited to a fairly conducted examination for Hatorath Horaah! Is there not an intrinsic relationship between the spirit of the subject matter that has to be mastered for that degree and the kind of character which it permits to develop?

I am in the habit of writing regularly every Friday to mother who is now with my sister at Woonsocket. Last Friday I forgot to write. When I reminded myself it was already Sabbath. Knowing that mother would be very much worried and ? to make Sophie's life miserable if she were not to receive her usual Saturday morning letter from me, I went into the bathroom after supper and wrote a letter to her.

Another "sin" I committed by attending the celebration of the silver wedding anniversary of the Polstems who are members of the SAJ. Personally I could see nothing wrong in holding an affair of that kind on Simhath Torah night. But the way it was celebrated shocked my sensibilities. There was not the least intimation of the Simhath Torah spirit. The people proceeded with the meal as soon as they sat down, behaved boisterously at table, rose as soon as they were through eating and drinking and began dancing. The few remarks that I made were not heard by the greater part of the gathering, nor listened to by those within hearing.

Next morning Lena developed ptomaine poisoning and I had indigestion. Formerly they would have said, I suppose, that we paid the penalty for participating in a banquet at which the Jewish law was violated.

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Wednesday, October 18, 1922

The Seminary faculty at the present time is very much depleted. Instead of making a strenuous effort to get the necessary resources and to fill the vacancies on the faculty created by the death of Friedlander and Kotkor, Adler is passively waiting for the alumni to raise the money. In the meantime the students are not receiving the instruction to which they are entitled. The Seminary has become so talmudized in deference to Ginzberg's mastery of the Talmud that the Bible has come to play a secondary role. Last year Ginzberg gave a course in the Bible ^{to the} advanced students and Levine to the rest of the student body. This year about nine or ten students of the ^{Yeshiva} joined the Seminary in a body so disorganized has that institution become. Being quite expert in the Talmud they would accept no other instruction in Talmud except that given by Ginzberg. To meet ~~their~~ wishes Adler was ready at one stroke to palm off on Levine the task of teaching Bible to all the students of

the Seminary, about forty in number, all at the same time. Levine is well read no doubt in the commentaries, but he is certainly not enough Biblical Scholar to undertake advanced work in that subject. But above all the complete disregard of all pedagogic principles in hoarding together so many men of such varied attainments for the purpose of giving them instruction in the most fundamental source of Judaism - the Scriptures. Such a scandalous procedure reflects the cynicism not of the conscious or deliberate type but of the light and thoughtless kind - that characterizes the principal men on the faculty.

I began my work in the Seminary today. In Midrash I started the study of Bereshith Rabba from the beginning of the book. In Homiletics I am taking up the theory and practice of sermon writing. For the first time since I have been giving the course I have ventured to give text books to the students. A sort of tradition that it is below the dignity of a lecturing professor to make use of a text book has held me back. But I am sure that the men could gain a great deal from the book on Public Speaking by Winans and "The Preacher" by Hoyt. I therefore recommended those books to them.

It is to be regretted that there is no book on Jewish Homiletic of any value. Maybaum's book has only one idea in it that is of any account, namely that the sermon is an integral part of the service. All the rest is mere padding. The list of sermons preached from German pulpits which constitutes half the book has none but antiquarian interest.

I have asked the students to begin the accumulation of sermon material by keeping notebooks into which they are expected to enter the results of their reading and observation. Instead of an examination at the end of the year I shall judge their work by the contents of their notebooks.

The students seemed to be very pleased with the opening lecture

A young man by the name of Canter, a brother to Rabbi Bernard Canter who met his death together with Friedlaender, is another of the students of Wise's Institute of Religion who came to see me yesterday. He is one of the type of men who are eaten up with intellectual honesty. He, too, has had a run in with Blau. The latter noticed Cantor about to cut a lecture to be given by him. "Have you nothing to learn from me?" Blau very tactfully addressed Cantor. "I do not think so," replied Cantor. "That is an impertinence," Blau snapped back.

I met Cantor several times last year. He was introduced to me^{by}/my nephew Harold Rubin. He has been taking charge, I believe, of the branch of the new synagogue that has been established in Newark. But his experience with the bourgeois element there, his own lack of a point of view, together with his honesty conspire to make him question whether he has the right to act as spiritual leader. It is a case of the blind attempting to lead the lame.

This time he came to ask me whether I would help him with the writing of his thesis. It took me some time to get at what he was trying to set forth in his thesis. At last I discovered that he was groping after the same idea that I formulated rather crudely in my paper that I read in Chicago about five years ago on the need of a Scientific Basis, etc.

* * *

Friday, October 20, 1922

Last night the Board of Trustees of the SAJ met at the house of Abe Liebovitz, who is himself a member of the Board. We were served supper. The only ones missing were Turrell, who was out of town, and S. C. Lamport, who apparently looked for an excuse to stay away and readily found one in the fact that he was not invited personally by Abe Liebovitz. I am rather glad that he is staying out. He is entirely fibre of too coarse a ~~fix~~ to appreciate the kind of discussion which we have been carrying on at these meetings.

At this meeting I had occasion to unfold for the first time the plans that the SAJ give concrete expression to its purpose by establishing an institution to be known as the Jewish Institute for Social Study. I recognized that there is much to be gained from being committed to the putting up of a structure. But before we can proceed with the buying of ground and getting up plans for the building it is essential that the members of the SAJ be thoroughly familiar with the purpose of the organization.

I recast the formulation of the purpose to read thus: The purpose of the SAJ is to live and spread the Jewish idea that the best way to serve God is to engage in life-long study of moral duty.

Simmons said that it was necessary for us to state what our conception of God was. I replied that one could easily gather from the statement of the purpose the conception of God that was at the basis of our plan of action. When you are told of a certain person that you could please him no better than by giving him a gift of books you imply that he has literary tastes; pictures, that he is artistically inclined; a stradivarius, that he is a virtuoso. Thus by stating that the best/^{way}of serving God is to engage in moral study, the inference is that you assume his nature is in some way kindred with the application of the mind to problems of right and wrong. That is the most that Judaism wants us to posit about God. Further than that it is left to each individual to think out for himself.

Everyone went away satisfied that that was an evening well spent.

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Thursday, October 26, 1922

I was very much distressed to learn last night from Mr. and Mrs. Abe Burnstine what trouble they were having with their oldest boy Norman who is only a lad of 14. As a child they told me, he showed a

tendency to be overscrupulous in his observance of the ritual laws, ~~but~~ whereas now he seeks out every possible opportunity to evade their observance. But this is the least serious aspect of his behavior. He is not only impudent toward his parents; he actually despises them for being less successful financially than some of the rich people among his relatives. His ideal of a man is Arthur Lamport, his mother's brother-in-law. He is apparently devoid of all ethical sentiments, and there is no better side to his nature that one might appeal to. He is lazy and from what Kadushin tells me, without a sense of honor.

(Saturday, February 26, 1949: Norman's parents died some years ago and Norman had a nervous breakdown which terminated in suicide ~~xxxx~~ a few months ago.)

His mother attributes his corruption to influences which pervade the upper Broadway environment. Unfortunately the Jews of the well-to-do class seem to constitute the predominant element of the population in this West side section of the city. They are conspicuous by reason of their vulgarity and flashiness. The women spend most of their leisure at the dressmakers' and milliners' and in playing cards. They give their children large amounts of spending money in order not to be disturbed by them. That money is spent in theatres, cabarets and gambling. Probably the many kept women who inhabit the Riverside Apartments have something to do with the flashy styles of wearing ~~apparel~~ apparel that one sees in this part of Upper Broadway. The effect of such surroundings on the boys and girls of Jewish parents of means is morally devastating.

What provokes me is that with so many Rabbis of the younger set at the head of powerful congregations in this neighborhood there should be no attempt made to clean up this Sodom that is exposing us Jews to the taunts of our neighbors. There are men like Pool, Newman, Goldstein (Israel, Goldstein (Sidney) Stephen Wise, Solomon, Nathan Stern. Each one is so busy crying up his wares so as to attract customers to

his own little shop of religion that the moral degeneracy that is eating away at the very vitals of our people does not give them the least concern.

* * * *

Sunday, October 29, 1922

The meeting of the SAJ trustees last Thursday night was by no means as exhilarating as the previous one. In the first place, there were fewer men present -- Simmons, Levy, Liebovitz, Winer and Lubetkin.-- and the greater part of the meeting was taken up with business which had to be attended to.

I put the question to those present whether at the meetings to be held at the members' homes it was advisable to state that we should take steps to carry out the purpose of the SAJ by choosing a site and drawing up plans for an Institute for Social Study. This question brought out the fact that those present had still a vague idea of what I was after. Winer again raised the objection that if the SAJ will not minister to the religious needs of those that are affiliated with it, it will be departing from the original purpose for which it had been organized. He was evidently under the impression that I intended that Institute to take up ethical and social studies meant only for specialists, and that the religious element would be entirely relegated to the background. I emphatically denied that I had such an institution in mind. My purpose was, I said, to induce the SAJ to establish an institution where the religious element consisting of worship and elementary religious education in the authorized texts of Judaism would constitute the indispensable foundation. The novum in the plan I suggest consists in the proposal to carry forward the elementary religious education by translating the ancient values into terms comprehensible and acceptable to the modern mind; this process is then to be followed by concrete application to the various social, economic and political problems of

the day. I spoke of the kind of religious education that at the present time passes as adequate as being nothing more than the foundation of a complete moral training; though indispensable is uninhabitable unless supplemented by an upper structure of modern concepts and their applications.

Winer appeared satisfied with my explanation. How long he will remember it is hard telling.

In the meantime the idea of establishing an institution of that kind is occupying my mind a good deal of the time. The prospect of it is giving me a great deal of joy. I am beginning to believe that it is not necessary at all to wait until we shall have a building of our own. It is perhaps preferable to begin organizing a faculty right now and hold classes in our present quarters. Even the name is beginning to form itself more clearly in my mind. I should like to have it called the Jewish Ethical Institute.

The problem of finding a suitable faculty will not be an easy one. It will not be difficult to train from among the Teachers Institute graduates some who might be able to transmit to their pupils not merely Jewish History and Hebrew, but a true ethical attitude toward life. Nor will it be hard to secure teachers for the Intermediate Department. Men like Kadushin and Honor might qualify for such posts. But where to find men who are at heart real Jews and who possessing considerable Jewish knowledge, can point to a detailed application of that knowledge to the problems of life is something I am unable to say at present.

Tonight I attended a gathering of Seminary faculty students and friends. That gathering was for a threefold purpose: to celebrate the opening of the Seminary; to bestow the degree of Hatarath Horaah upon Dr. Finkelstein and to witness the unveiling of a tablet in memory of

Jacob H. Schiff. It took this triple celebration to bring out the one hundred people who were present.

Adler as usual said nothing though he spoke for some time. Ginzberg began well - the part of the speech that he seems to have memorized - and ended up poorly. Imitating Schechter's manner of address, he pointed out that there was a distinction between S'micah in Judaism and the laying on of the hands in Christianity which ceremony was a mystic rite. S'michah was ~~awarded~~ for knowledge and not granted to those to whom Talmud and Codes were a mystery. This is a jest a la Schechter.

After he was through speaking, he fumbled in one of his back trousers pocket for a slip of paper whereon was written the formula of the Hatarath Haraah.

Hyamson who by right should have ^{been} the one to direct Finkelstein studies for the "atraah, that is if he were in any way qualified to fill the position of Professor of Codes - played a very humble and humiliating role in the entire procedure. He had to ask Ginzberg to show him the formula of the Hatarah just before the Faculty marched into the auditorium and Ginzberg handed it to him with his cynical smile as if in contempt for a poor boob who has to make a pretense of knowing what it is all about. I can not see how a man with any sense of self-respect can go through such humiliation.

The members of the Faculty who sat on the platform had to be dressed up in the medieval academic garb. Such were the acting president orders. The incongruity of wearing the garb of Christian scholasticism that has kept back the world for a thousand years from making any progress in a ceremony connected with the conferring of the most traditional Jewish distinction.

But is not the very idea of granting the degree "Rabbi" to men, many of whom have scarcely a reading knowledge of Talmud, an absurdity in an institution that is dedicated to the upholding of "traditional" Jewish

Monday, October 30, 1922

Just returned from Borough Park. I delivered an address to a group of about 150 men, women and young people gathered in the vestry rooms of Temple Emanuel. I went there at the request of Chipkin, the registrar of the Extension Classes of the Teachers Institute who is working very hard to establish a branch in Borough Park. Although that section is thickly populated by Jews, and has all kinds of religious, social and educational institutions, it does not seem to have produced more than a mere handful of young people who might consider joining classes in Hebrew, History and Bible. Withal that there is a nucleus even there which if properly nurtured could grow to large proportions. Strange to say, that nucleus seems to come for the most part from the most Orthodox part of that community, the part identified with a congregation known as the "Shomrei Emunah," nicknamed "Show me the money" congregation. The moving spirits in this attempt to establish the Extension classes there seem to be two brothers by the name of Green, sons of an Orthodox rabbi. Both of them are graduates of the Institute and attendants of the Shomrei Emunah synagogue. Last Sabbath the older one of the brothers made the announcement concerning the meeting scheduled for tonight at the Temple Emanuel. The mention of my name called forth violent protests on the part of a Mr. Roth, who is the president of a ^Heshiba or parochial school in Borough Park and of Mr. or Rabbi Peikes who though an ex-rabbi, is still an aspirant for the rabbinate. (He was my predecessor in the 85 St. Congregation whose minister I was during the years 1903-1909.) They considered it improper for the pulpit of so orthodox a synagogue to be used for making propaganda for work with which I a notorious "Epikuros" had anything to do. Mr. Peikes took pains, however, to ask Mr. Green not to tell me that he protested against the announcement.

The effect of the tussle that took place last Sabbath at the

Shomrei Emunah Synagogue was that about a dozen people at least came to hear me and some of them even contributed toward the fund of \$500 which Mr. Chipkin asked for the maintenance of those classes.

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Sunday night, November 5, 1922

Last Tuesday I officiated at the wedding of David Unterberg at the Astor Hotel. There were about 300 guests present. In contrast with affairs of that kind which are usually orgies of boisterousness, the Unterbergs always inspire a sense of dignity in their guests which puts those guests on their good behavior. In contrast with weddings at which I have occasion to officiate, I was able to recite the grace without having to ask the audience repeatedly to refrain from laughter and conversation. All I had to say was "No Jewish wedding - I am using the term Jewish in the sense in which it is so beautifully lived up to by the Unterbergs and the Shapiros (I had to mention the latter so as not to imply any invidious distinction) - No Jewish wedding is complete without the expression of gratitude for the joys and the blessings that God confers on us. This introduction over, I proceeded with the Grace and the Seven Benedictions. All present either joined or observed respectful silence.

The first of the home meetings of the SAJ members was held last Thursday at the home of Mr. Mann, West End Ave. at 93 St. Three members and their wives, two trustees and their wives and the rest friends of the Manns, twenty in all. Of the outsiders there was one Zipkin. Judging by his interpellations I inferred that he was trying to find an excuse for not joining the SAJ. He offered a counter proposition to the idea of the Jewish Ethical Institute. He believed that the problem of Judaism would be solved if all the synagogues and temples were kept open every day of the week, and addresses delivered by laymen on any topic of general interest. The meeting as a whole seemed very successful.

Dr. Benderly arrived yesterday from Palestine whither he took his family about five months ago. He came to the SAJ services this morning, had dinner with us and spent all afternoon with me.

He no longer appeared to me the Dr. Benderly of ten and twelve years ago, iron willed, ever cheerful and irresistible. I saw before me a broken man. He seems to me like a man holding on to a raft for dear life. The success of his Palestinian work is the only thing that will enable him to carry on. At present the American Palestine Co. is quite demoralized.

Friday, November 10, 1922

They have contracts for payment from share holders amounting to about \$1,200,000. of which only about \$170,000 has been collected. A goodly part of that money has been paid out to salesmen.

The company would be able to do very good business in Palestine if it were not headed by a man like S. C. Lamport, who believes he is doing the Jews a favor and an honor by lending his name to the undertaking. He takes very little active interest in the business part of it. He made one good purchase of "ducking" from the government and he never stops telling about it. The other directors treat the whole matter in the same spirit as they do the various philanthropic institutions with which they are connected. Not a one of them gives even a modicum of the business ability and energy that they devote to their various businesses.

My heart goes out to Benderly. At the age of 46, he finds himself placed in a position which compels him to commute every six months between here and Palestine. This means being away half of each year from his family. This is very hard on a man who has no other pleasure or recreation in life.

Now his family is in Jaffa, Palestine, whither he took them five months ago. His wife, who is one of the bravest little women I have ever met, is helping him with the manufacture there of the tent

materials for the tent-houses which he is trying to sell to the settlers in Palestine. She no sooner came to Palestine than she took sick, and after her every one of the three children in turn. Not far away from them the bubonic plague broke out. One can imagine the state of mind in which the Benderlys were in. And now that he is alone, the anxiety as to their welfare seems to be constantly haunting him; fears of plagues,^{and}/pogroms fill his mind. He showed me a little notebook in which he worked out a code by means of which he hopes to keep himself informed about his family - a) shear juashub is alright; b) shear jashut has a little fever, etc. What a father has to bear! I never saw his eyes fill so often with tears and his voice choking up as I have seen him of late.

If at least there were the prospect of carrying out his plans. Instead of that S. C. Lamport made it plain to him the first day he (B) came back that the reason the people who bought the shares refuse to make further payments is because they claim that the company was organized to give Benderly a living. S. C. therefore thought it advisable to take steps toward making Benderly economically independent by establishing a \$100,000 fund which could be invested in Palestine work and having Benderly himself live on the income thereof, with the understanding that he would draw that income as long as he will do work for the American Palestine Co. S. C. offers to contribute \$10,000. I wonder whether S. C. expects the other \$90,000 to be found. In the meantime, Benderly's position is far from enviable.

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Friday, November 17, 1922

On Sunday, Nov. 5 I attended a meeting of the class of 1917 of the Teachers Institute. The meeting took place at Mrs. Turman's house, 1347 President Street, Brooklyn.

On Sunday, November 12 I took part in the meeting of the T.I. Alumni. The meeting took place at the SAJ House, 41 W. 86 St.

Last Saturday, November 11, Dr. Felix Perles of Konigsberg, who is lecturing at Wise's Jewish Institute of Religion came to the SAJ services. I had him to dinner. I went with him to his apartment where I met Prof. Elbogen.

Wednesday morning I visited the class in Bible at Wise's Institute.

Today I spent the afternoon with Mr. Idelson, the composer and collector of Jewish music.

This morning I had a conversation with a seminary student by the name of Grossman. What he had to say about the Seminary, and especially about Ginzberg confirmed me in my opinion that both contribute very little toward developing in the students a high regard for the calling of the rabbinate.

* * * *

Thursday, December 7, 1922

This has been one of the unhappiest weeks of my life. It began with Lena^a showing me what my Judith thinks of me whenever I find it necessary to insist upon her realizing that she is after all my child and that she still owes me a certain degree of filial obedience. God knows I do my utmost to develop in her a sense of self-reliance, but until I can be certain that she has the necessary reasonableness and self control to make self-reliance safe I deem it my duty to exercise guardianship. She is only thirteen at present. Yet when upon a single occasion I crossed her will, she became so wrought up that she changed me in her diary with being a despot. There are a number of irrelevant charges she brings against me in what she says there -- which fact leads me to believe that I am bound to be disappointed if I look forward to having in her an intellectual companion. She does not seem to have the love for

me that my other little ones have. If I do not engage her in conversation she is apt to ignore me for weeks as though I did not exist. There are probably explanations for all this coldness, explanations that we may find in the books on adolescence. Nevertheless the experience of it hurts me to the core.

On Tuesday night this week, I took part in a small conference of some of the trustees of the American Palestine Co. for the purpose of getting them to establish a fund for Benderly. It has to be done immediately, because he is about to cease drawing any salary from that Company at the end of this month. I was always wondering why he drew the salary of \$15,000 from the company. But in the course of conversation with Semel I learned that Benderly was in debt to the amount of \$20,000 as a result of his venture into business, after he had ceased drawing salary from the Bureau of Education and that he was paying off that debt from what he was getting from the American Palestine Co. Semel took the blame for having gotten Benderly into debt.

The plan of getting together \$100,000 was out of question. Judge Rosalsky, Semel and myself worked hard to get at least \$50,000. The conference which lasted three hours brought very little result.

Benderly's plight is causing me a great deal of grief.

Borne down by the weight of sorrow caused by both of these incidents I was in no mood to take part in the reception given to Dr. Perles and Prof. Elbogen at Lewison's home, and to say a few words of welcome. All day yesterday I labored over what I was going to say. Prof. Moore of Harvard and Pres. McGiffert of the Union Theological Seminary were the two others who were invited to ~~exp~~end greetings to these European scholars. Moore preceded me; he said just a few simple words of greeting and congratulated Wise and the Institute of Religion.

